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James Turner Johnson

THE DEIST MINIMUM
Avery Cardinal Dulles

THE LAUGHTER OF THE PHILOSOPHERS
David B. Hart

William McGurn *on abortion and the Democratic Party*
Vincent Phillip Muñoz *on the battle for the Pledge*
Douglas Farrow *on Anglicans aground*
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FIRST THINGS

January 2005 • Number 149

Correspondence

2 Canadian conservatives?; evangelical resources; Kierkegaard's Christianity; Episcopal expectations

Opinion

William McGurn 6 Bob Casey's Revenge
Vincent Phillip Muñoz 8 Saving the Pledge
Douglas Farrow 11 Anglicanism Runs Aground

Articles

James Turner Johnson 14 Just War, As It Was and Is
Avery Cardinal Dulles 25 The Deist Minimum
David B. Hart 31 The Laughter of the Philosophers

Books

Eric Cohen 38 Human Dignity and the Biotech Century
edited by Charles W. Colson and Nigel M. De S. Cameron
J. A. Gray 42 Artistic License by Brooke Allen
Edward Short 46 Alec Guinness by Piers Paul Read
Algis Valiunas 49 Voltaire in Exile by Ian Davidson
54 Briefly Noted

The Public Square

Richard John Neuhaus 60 One Little Word, *etc.*

Poetry

Marjorie Maddox (24), *Clive Watkins* (30), *Matthew Boudway* (37)

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Canadian Conservatives?

Raymond J. de Souza's "Unsettling Canada" (October 2004) contains solid hints about why social conservatives continue to forge ill-advised alliances with political conservatives. However, in noting the weakened position of social conservatives within Canada's Liberal Party, Father de Souza does not fully say why there exist identical tensions within the Conservative Party—tensions that would lead to virtually identical setbacks if the Conservative Party were to assume power in the future. Just consider the record of almost every recent conservative government in Canada, whether provincial or federal.

For social conservatives to build alliances with political conservatives they must bargain away long-term social objectives in favor of perceived short-term political opportunities. Time and again, politically conservative power-brokers have ignored, defeated, or buried social conservative views, except during the odd election campaign. In the end, what is the real difference between the avowedly secularist liberal left and the effectively secularist right? Given the genuinely isolated position of social conservatives, it is not inconceivable that a better political strategy would be to work with the left instead of the right.

One reason for suggesting this strategy is purely pragmatic. As Fr. de Souza notes, most new immigrants to Canada are predisposed to social conservative views, yet they tend not to vote for conservatives. Perhaps this is because these immigrants are turned off by a platform that favors U.S. foreign policy, economic privatization, looser environmental controls, and the erosion of publicly available health care. These are the policy options espoused by political conservatives in Canada.

If social conservatives decamp permanently in the Canadian Conservative Party, I fear that they will end up being taken for granted and ultimately marginalized from public discussions altogether. Social conservative views need to be voiced in other political parties, where other positions of ostensibly equal importance to social conservatives are already articulated and defended.

Paul Allen
Department of Theological Studies
Concordia University
Montreal, Quebec

I appreciated Raymond J. de Souza's thoughtful article reminding Canadians that the new Conservative Party must espouse conservative views. Now is not the time for so-called compromise on divisive issues such as the military, abortion, and same-sex marriage; it is time for leadership that will attract individuals disappointed with the Liberal Party and yet unsure where to turn, ideologically speaking. Although this turning will possibly take a long time and several elections could be lost as rational debate is drowned out by shouts of "bigotry" and "extremism," the time is ripe for change. Certainly the quick turnaround of Ontario under former Premier Mike Harris is reason for hope and optimism on a national scale.

While Father de Souza lacked the space to discuss Quebec, it is no secret that the success of any future government depends on what happens in this troubled province. Should Québécois move beyond their exclusive support for the Liberal Party and the Bloc Québécois, Canada might become capable of re-asserting its rural, conservative iden-

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tity, which is now concealed by the influence of the left-of-center media, liberal judicial rulings, and regional voting. Nothing less than Canadian identity is at stake.

Aaron Perry
Asbury Theological Seminary
Wilmore, Kentucky

Raymond J. de Souza replies:
Both correspondents underscore the difficult situation in which social conservatives find themselves in Canada. Mr. Perry is right to highlight that Quebec's recent voting patterns pose a particular challenge to any sort of conservative agenda—social or otherwise. But Quebec is not a mirror of the rest of the country—indeed, on most of the cultural and social issues, Quebec is far more aggressively secular and liberal than the other provinces.

Dr. Allen is correct that social conservatives should be at home in political parties of the left as well as the right; there ought to be a home for those who are pro-life and pro-family, and who support a robust welfare state. Alas, in Canada as in the United States, the parties of the left have been so captured by an extreme secular liberalism that it is difficult to see how Dr. Allen's hopes could be fulfilled. In the 2004 election campaign, Prime Minister Paul Martin went so far as to say that he would not permit any Liberal Members of Parliament to introduce a bill that would circumscribe the abortion license in any way. It is unlikely that a Prime Minister even has that power, but it surely indicates that the Liberal Party, while it might tolerate a few pro-life, pro-family MPs, is officially hostile to their agenda. The Conservative Party is, on this score, at least open to the very discussion that Dr. Allen advocates. It is not obvious that the social conservatives will win that argument, and, as he correctly notes, Conservative governments in Canada have not notably advanced a socially conservative agenda. Nevertheless, social conservatives are active in the Conservative Party not because that is an ideal place to be, but because it is just about the only place that will have them.

Evangelical Resources

Ten years after his indictment of evangelical intellectual life, Mark Noll sounds a more hopeful note in "The Evangelical Mind Today" (October 2004). Since hope is one of the Christian virtues, I am reluctant to dispute his optimism. Yet I find his explanation of evangelicalism's theological resources to be troubling.

Most of the serious evangelical undergraduates I have met over the last several years are drawn to Roman Catholicism, which they find to be the most attractive outlet for their desire to unite faith and learning. There are several reasons for this, among them that Roman Catholicism possesses a tradition of learning and a body of teaching that has immediate appeal to students starving for a Christian faith that has intellectual depth and rigor.

This may not be a problem for Professor Noll, who was one of the signers of "Evangelicals and Catholics Together." My own conviction is that historic Protestantism has its own theological and liturgical resources that, sadly, contemporary evangelicals have ignored and in some cases repudiated. We are thus left with the question that Prof. Noll's book originally raised and that remains unanswered today: Will evangelicals who become intellectually serious remain evangelical once they awaken from their pietistic slumbers? If not, is the "evangelical mind" really a possibility—or is it, instead, an oxymoron?

Darryl G. Hart
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Mark Noll replies:
Darryl G. Hart is a careful reader, so he will have noted that the hope expressed in my article was for "Christian thinking by evangelicals" rather than for an "evangelical mind" as such. I concur with much of the critique that Professor Hart has delivered against contemporary evangelicalism in his recent books. Yet considered soberly, the only realistic hope for faithful Christian learning in the contemporary Western world lies with Catholic communities, evangelical communities, or (at best) some combination of the two. (It is, of course, not Christian to abandon hope altogether.) Catholicism, despite all its conflicts and confusions, retains considerable resources for nourishing intellectual life. Evangelicals, despite all of our excesses and inadequacies, remain open to at least some positive theological influences from the confessional Protestant past. To imagine that a vigorous classical Protestantism, with well-constructed academic institutions and well-balanced Christian cultural instincts, could repudiate modern evangelicalism and thereby regain intellectual depth, gravity, and authority is to indulge in a romantic fantasy.

Kierkegaard's Christianity

In "Kierkegaard for Grownups" (October 2004), Richard John Neuhaus adds himself to a long list of Catholic scholars who have looked favorably on Søren Kierkegaard, Denmark's great practitioner of Christo-Socratic existentialism. In 1957, Cornelio Fabro's roster of "Catholic scholars who have understood the positive aspects of K's work" included: Theodor Häcker, Romano Guardini, Erich Pryzwara, F. J. Billeskov-Jansen, Yves Congar, Jerome Hamer, and Regis Jolivet. An updated roster would surely have to include Bernard Lonergan, Hans Urs von Balthasar, James Collins, Walker Percy, Louis Dupré, and, now, Father Neuhaus.

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What makes Neuhaus' discussion unique is his use of Kierkegaard's concept of the "contemporaneity" of Christ to describe the contemporaneity of Christ's Church. Cornelio Fabro's complementary interpretation of Kierkegaard is helpful here. Like Fr. Neuhaus, Fabro identifies "the Catholic actuality" with Kierkegaard's (developed) concept of the dialectic of faith. He does so by drawing our attention to the fact that in 1850 Kierkegaard "discovered Hugh of St. Victor's formula on the relations between reason and faith, a formula which had inspired the best Scholastics, especially St. Thomas." Kierkegaard himself wrote: "A true sentence of Hugh of St. Victor: 'In things which are above reason, faith is not really supported by reason, because reason cannot grasp what faith believes; but there is also something here as a result of which reason is determined, or which determines reason to honor faith which it cannot perfectly understand.'" Kierkegaard then added: "That is what I explained . . . for instance . . . in the *Concluding Postscript* [sic]. . . ."

Given Kierkegaard's acceptance of Hugh's formula as consistent with his *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*—and given the fact that Hugh's formula has always been a touchstone of the Catholic school—we can now see how Catholic Christianity can be found (in Neuhaus' words) "on the far side of Kierkegaard" by "long and hard wrestling with Kierkegaard." As Fabro notes, Kierkegaard's concept of faith "constitutes, essentially, a return to the authentic Christian position—even, if you will, a return to the Catholic and Thomistic position, at least on some points."

John F. Maguire
Natural Law Jurisprudence Center
Berkeley, California

Richard John Neuhaus' essay brought to mind Francis Schaeffer's synopsis of Western philosophy, in which he puts Kierkegaard at the pivot point. With Kierkegaard, he said, Western philosophy falls below the "line of despair. This does not mean that philosophers sit and weep, though many of them do. It means that they have given up hope of constructing a unified field of knowledge. There is not a chair of philosophy of any importance in the world today who still believes that it can be done. I call them anti-philosophers." Modern theology is, likewise, existential philosophy expressed in theological language. Schaeffer called it anti-theology.

We can argue about whether Kierkegaard himself falls below the line of despair. We can debate whether he was a Christian. Some of his writings are still read in some churches as Christian devotionals. But he has rejected the foundation of Christian faith. He rejects the idea that Christianity is based upon objective truth—a truth that can be subjected to verification or falsification by ordinary methods of investigation. Kierkegaard accepts the conclusion of Kant, that man cannot know transcendent truth by reason and experience. He properly rejects Hegel's attempt to surmount Kant's impasse. Then he asks us to take an irrational leap of faith. As Schaeffer pointed out, Kierkegaard "asks us to believe, against all the evidence of reason and experience, that God is good."

DuPree Moore
Mineral Bluff, Georgia

RJN replies:
I thank John F. Maguire for his interesting addendum. As for Francis Schaeffer, his contributions to evangelical Protestant thought are significant, but he painted with a very broad and eccentric philosophical brush. I suppose some might be inclined to, but nobody should, debate whether or not Kierkegaard was a Christian. He was.

Episcopal Expectations

In "Bishops at a Turning Point" (Public Square, October 2004), Richard John Neuhaus offers a lucid and, as he might say, winsomely optimistic analysis of the American bishops' assembly in Denver last June. If the bishops, prodded by some of the younger and more tough-minded members of the hierarchy, are in fact learning how to work together more effectively to meet the real needs of the Church, it is good news indeed.

There is, however, an element of Father Neuhaus' prescription that I find deeply troubling. I mean the argument that the bishops must meet behind closed doors, without the unwelcome attention of the press, in order to be sufficiently at ease to do their work.

Speaking to bishops from Pennsylvania and New Jersey on their recent *ad limina* visit to the Holy See, Pope John Paul II said the following: "Within a sound ecclesiology of Communion, a commitment to creating better structures of participation, consultation, and shared responsibility should not be misunderstood as a concession to a secular 'democratic' model of governance, but an intrinsic requirement of the exercise of episcopal authority and a necessary means of strengthening that authority."

Accountability in ecclesial governance is a necessary part of the vision sketched out by the Pope, and transparency in regard to the process of decision-making as well as its product is a necessary part of accountability.

I do not suggest that the bishops must open all parts of all their meetings to the media to achieve this result. Occasional assemblies entirely in executive session, like the one in Denver, are undoubtedly helpful in certain circumstances. Similarly, the bishops might wish to experiment more freely with closed-door regional assemblies than they have

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done up to now. No doubt there are other possibilities. The aim should be to find a workable mix of meeting formats that involve both open and closed doors. By contrast, a retreat into a uniform policy of secrecy would be a step backward, with disastrous long-term results.

One further point. Fr. Neuhaus makes a common mistake in separating the episcopal conference from its "supporting institution," the bishops conference. In fact, the episcopal conference *is* the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB). This entity has a staff, of course, and the relationship of bishops to staff is a legitimate topic for inquiry and, at times, criticism. Nevertheless, de facto and de jure the American bishops *are* the USCCB.

Russell Shaw
Washington, D.C.

The upbeat tone and conclusions of Richard John Neuhaus' commentary came as a surprise, especially after his many gloomy statements over the past two years.

Father Neuhaus' positive evaluation of the bishops seems to be based to a large extent on their own accounts of their closed June meeting. Fr. Neuhaus writes that "there was real discussion and deliberation . . . the bishops spoke out as bishops, as shepherds and teachers of the Church, and not as managers." I hope they will soon speak out as shepherds and teachers to their flocks, in public, and not just to each other in private.

Fr. Neuhaus also refers to "JPII bishops." But the Pope has been appointing bishops for twenty-six years now. I believe the majority of bishops in the world are JPII bishops. Yet Fr. Neuhaus highlights fourteen of them for praise. This is admittedly more than a handful, but out of 281 active bishops it is not much more. These would be the same bishops who, for example, rendered *Ex Corde Ecclesiae* inoperative.

Lastly, Fr. Neuhaus welcomes the June statement "Catholics in Political Life" because it "acknowledges the worries of the timid while affirming" a stronger course of action. But isn't this just another way of saying that it was a statement with enough ambiguity to allow all of the bishops to back it, no matter what their position? Our expectations for the successors to the Apostles seem to have sunk pretty low.

Allan Smiley
Cold Spring, Kentucky

From the point of view of the unborn child, I see no evidence that the bishops are at a turning point, as Richard John Neuhaus suggests. Nothing Father Neuhaus writes changes the fact that the bishops as a group failed to confront the continued defiance of pro-choice Catholic politicians. These politicians continue to support abortion and receive Communion, thereby inspiring grave scandal in the Church. It's business as usual for the bishops. I wonder if the politicians themselves consider the bishops' statement to be assertive? It certainly doesn't seem to have changed anyone's behavior.

John Kleinhenz
Corvallis, Oregon

RJN replies:
I stand in admiration of Russell Shaw's many contributions to Catholic thought and practice over the years, and he is right to emphasize the importance of accountability. Yet I wonder if language about "closed doors," "transparency," and "secrecy" is appropriate to the charism and tasks of bishops in the same way that that language is used with respect to political leaders. The National Review Board, for instance, emphasizes the importance of "fraternal correction." That is simply not going to happen in the presence of the media. There is a distinction to be made between meetings that are fraternal and informal, on the one hand, and secretive and unaccountable, on the other. In addition, I believe individual bishops, as teachers of their local churches, should be more publicly forthcoming and less inhibited by a false "collegiality" in differing from other bishops when necessary. But Mr. Shaw and I are agreed that this is a period of promising experimentation in the exercise of episcopal leadership. Messrs. Smiley and Kleinhenz apparently begin with very low expectations indeed. As for the fourteen who were regularly mentioned to me, they were named as emerging leaders of the conference. Leaders in any institution are always in the minority. I should add that readers, including bishops, have urged upon me at least fourteen other candidates for the list, which I again emphasize is not my list but names proposed by members of the conference.

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Opinion

Bob Casey's Revenge

William McGurn

I can't believe I'm losing to this idiot. So said John Kerry during the presidential campaign. Judging from the news stories following the election, many of his supporters appear to have had the same reaction—with no sense that the condescension inherent in their candidate's statement helps illuminate the reasons for the election results.

In the *New York Times* Maureen Dowd complained that Kerry lost because the President divided America "along fault lines of fear, intolerance, ignorance, and religious rule." In the *Washington Post*, E. J. Dionne took much the same line, attributing the Kerry defeat to "vicious personal attacks, the exploitation of strong religious feelings, and an effort to create the appearance of strong leadership that would do Hollywood proud." James Carville said it was the lack of a "compelling narrative."

But perhaps the best explanation was given by a Democrat who called this election more than a decade ago: Bob Casey, the governor of Pennsylvania from 1987 to 1995.

I didn't know Governor Casey personally. But back in 1992, fate put me within a few feet of him inside Madison Square Garden during the Democratic National Convention. That was when Clinton officials refused a place at the podium for the Democratic governor of America's fifth-largest state while also providing speaking slots for six pro-choice *Republican* women. To make sure the point was delivered, one of these was a pro-choice woman who had campaigned for Casey's Republican opponent.

On Election Day 2004, the silencing of Bob Casey thundered through America's polling booths. In vain, Casey in 1992 had warned his fellow Democrats about allowing the Party to be become "little more than an auxiliary of NARAL." In his autobiography he put it this way:

> Many people discount the power of the so-called "cultural issues"—and especially of the abortion issue. I see it just the other way around. These issues are central to the national resurgence of the Republicans, central to the national implosion of the Democrats, central to the question of whether there will be a third party. The national Democrats may, and probably will, get a temporary bump in the polls—even, perhaps, one more national election victory—from their reactive strategy as the defenders of the elderly and poor who rely on Medicare and Medicaid. But the Democrats' national decline—or better, their national disintegration—will continue relentlessly and inexorably until they come to grips with these values issues, primarily abortion.

As Democrats emerge from the electoral rubble, must not a few be noticing that Bob Casey has proved to be prophetic? Today a Republican who lost the popular vote in 2000 and launched a controversial war returns to the White House with the largest number of votes any American President has ever received; Republicans have added to their majority in the House; and they now well and truly control the Senate—even if it's not yet clear that they control Arlen Specter.

Another way to put it is this: Democrats seeking to understand their plight need look no further than the Catholic members of their own leadership, whose apologias for the Party's pro-choice orthodoxy have had the unintended effect of making Republicans out of Democrats who might otherwise have delivered a Kerry victory. These Catholic leaders can be divided into two broad camps.

The first are the *co-dependents*. These are mostly Catholic politicos who sensed the turn in their Party elite and, whatever their initial reservations, ended up becoming stridently pro-choice. John Kerry personified today's Catholic Democrat. This is a man who began his primary campaign pledging his support for abortion at a NARAL Pro-Choice America dinner and near the end of his campaign repeated that support in a speech that was meant to stress how much his Catholic faith meant to him.

Whether or not charges of Kerry being a "flip-flopper" were valid on other issues, there can be little doubt that on abortion Senator Kerry, like his Party, has been clear and unequivocal. Here is the relevant language from the 2004 platform:

> Because we believe in the privacy and equality of women, we stand proudly for a woman's right to choose, consistent with *Roe v. Wade*, and regardless of her ability to pay. We stand firmly against Republican efforts to undermine that right.

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Let us parse the language of this plank. The first part declares pride, not regret, for a policy that is effectively abortion on demand. The second—"regardless of her ability to pay"—means that even those Americans who believe abortion to be the taking of innocent life will be taxed to underwrite it. The third—"we stand firmly against Republican efforts"—we saw in action during recent confirmation hearings, when Senator Chuck Schumer of New York posited that the "deeply held" Catholic beliefs of Bill Pryor disqualified him from sitting on the federal bench—and the Catholic Democrats on the Committee registered no protest.

It wasn't always so. Back in the 1970s, when Democrats were far more pro-life than Republicans, even Ted Kennedy could write the following in a letter to a constituent:

> While the deep concern of a woman bearing an unwanted child merits consideration and sympathy, it is my personal feeling that the legalization of abortion on demand is not in accordance with the value which our civilization places on human life. Wanted or unwanted, I believe that human life, even at its earliest stages, has certain rights which must be recognized—the right to be born, the right to love, the right to grow old.

Senator Kennedy, like his fellow Catholic Democrats, has become a staunch abortion supporter. Without these Catholics, Senate Democrats would not have the votes to keep Catholics such as Bill Pryor or Miguel Estrada off the federal bench.

These include just about every Catholic Democrat in the Upper House: John Kerry, Ted Kennedy, Tom Harkin, Barbara Milkulski, Pat Leahy, Christopher Dodd, Patty Murray, Mary Landrieu, Joe Biden, Jack Reed, and Dick Durbin. Some may have started out speaking of abortion as a necessary or inevitable evil. Over time, however, almost all have moved from regret to endorsement to where they are now: an aggressive and often publicly stated determination not to allow any pro-life shoots to sprout up through the NARAL concrete.

In this light the fate of Senator Tom Daschle, who lost his Senate seat in the November election, ought to be sobering. As Senate Minority Leader, Daschle told a Democratic audience that *Roe v. Wade* was "sacred ground"; he also orchestrated the filibusters that during President Bush's first term prevented pro-life judicial nominees from even receiving an up-or-down vote—and then complained during his reelection campaign about being called "pro-choice." This year, the contradictions caught up with Tom Daschle.

Then there's Democratic National Committee chairman Terry McAuliffe, an alumnus of Catholic University of America, who now has the distinction of having presided over one of the greatest collapses of a national party in modern times. Such is the Party orthodoxy that when a tiny group called Democrats for Life asked him to include a link to their website among the two hundred links on the DNC web page, Mr. McAuliffe refused. His Solomonic solution: no links at all.

Like the wife who calls the office to say that her alcoholic husband is sick with a fever when he's really off on another bender, these co-dependents do nothing about the Party's drift because they fear a stand will cost them heavily. Democrats like to talk about Halliburton and GOP ties to big business. But abortion is a big business, too—and embryonic stem-cell research potentially many times bigger—and woe to the pro-life Democrat who dares express dissent.

Again, it didn't have to be this way. It's too much to expect today's Democratic Party to be as pro-life as the GOP, given the institutional heft in today's Democratic Party of NARAL, Planned Parenthood, and Emily's List. But there are many gradations in between. Those Catholics who try to explain away the Party's abortion stance are fond of talking about politics being the art of the possible. But their silence works to diminish the possibilities for pro-lifers. Where, for example, were the Catholic Democrats when the Party eliminated from the abortion plank the "conscience clause" that recognized moral disagreement on the issue? Even the U.S. military has a "conscientious objector" provision. But not today's Democratic Party.

Yet as culpable as co-dependents are for the current plight of the Democrats at the national level, there is another category of Catholic Democrats who may be even worse. These are the *enablers*.

Enablers tend to work in the media, at universities (including, most disappointingly, Catholic universities), or for pressure groups. In contrast to co-dependents, enablers frequently insist they *do* find abortion abhorrent and that they fully accept church teaching. I do not question their sincerity, but I do question their judgment. The public record manifestly demonstrates that the consequences of their actions have served the NARAL culture better than the Catholic one.

In America today we have legions of these Catholic enablers. I'll mention just a few, beginning with the founding father of the enabler community, former New York Governor Mario Cuomo. In some ways Cuomo belongs in both groups, because as a pro-choice politico he was also a prominent co-dependent.

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But his greatest effect has been as an enabler, and his most important achievement has turned out to be his "personally-opposed-but" speech at Notre Dame in 1984.

In the twenty years since then, Cuomo's casuistry has proved useful to many a Catholic Democrat (and some Catholic Republicans). But this election exposed the flip side: the exodus of millions of Catholics who, rightly, see the Cuomo position for what it is: a wink and a nod.

Even so, the enabling industry thrives. In the last weeks of the 2004 electoral campaign, a Notre Dame dean, Mark Roche, appeared on the *New York Times* op-ed page making the case that, the evil of abortion notwithstanding, Kerry's candidacy reflected Catholic teaching better than Bush's did. On the whole, it reminded me of Marion Barry's defense of his mayoral record in Washington D.C.: "Outside of the killings, Washington has one of the lowest crime rates in the country."

As a newspaperman who has solicited and edited op-eds for the *Wall Street Journal* on three continents, I'm fairly confident that the name the *Times* wanted on its pro-Kerry op-ed page was not Mark Roche's but Notre Dame's. Which reminds us that Catholic enablers are institutions as often as individuals. Had Governor Cuomo delivered his 1984 speech at Yale or had Mark Roche been a dean at Indiana University, nobody would have paid attention.

Sometimes, to be sure, the enablers make a valid point here and there. But genuine argument is not their aim. Their aim is to get Catholics off the subject of abortion as fast as possible. As pro-life former Democratic Congressman John LaFalce puts it, "My problem with the 'personally-opposed-but' approach is that the people who make it spend 99 percent of their time talking about the 'but.'"

The list of enablers extends to some of the most prominent Catholic names in American public life. Chris Matthews of TV's *Hardball*, a pro-choice Holy Cross alum, was the 2003 commencement speaker at his alma mater despite his pro-choice public record. Paul Begala, a former Bob Casey man who later worked for Bill Clinton, the most pro-abortion President in history, now promotes the personally-opposed-but line on CNN. Like so many other Catholic enablers on the blue-state side, Begala, when pressed on abortion, responds with the They're Just As Corrupt As We Are argument, suggesting, for example, that the GOP's housing policy is somehow equal in moral import to the Democrats' platform plank on abortion.

Even the Catholic bishops undermine their case by, for example, appointing pro-choice Leon Panetta to serve on their National Review Board dealing with priestly abuse and a woman who is a staunch supporter of Emily's List on a similar advisory board dealing with the protection of children.

In the aftermath of Senator Kerry's defeat the Democrats are wondering how it is that the first Catholic nominee for President since 1960, a man who spoke glowingly of rosary beads and his days as an altar boy, lost the Catholic vote, lost the Mass-going Catholic vote by an even larger margin, and lost it by larger margins still in key swing states such as Florida and Ohio.

They have much to ponder, as do all Americans who truly care about life, for it should be clear that a Democratic Party in its current shape is not healthy for America. We need pro-life Democrats to be able to breathe again. This means that we need a Democratic leadership that doesn't demand that Democrats vote against, among other things, judicial nominees whose only crime is their "deeply held" personal beliefs or a suspected skepticism toward the one dogma in the Democratic Party: that while all other Supreme Court decisions are malleable and must bend to the social and political agenda of the day, *Roe v. Wade* is holy writ.

As Democratic leaders perform their post-election postmortems, let us hope that someone poses the question Bob Casey would have asked: How different might the outcome have been if the Party's Mario Cuomos, Mark Roches, and Paul Begalas had over the past two decades devoted as much of their passion and public commentary to the "personally opposed" as they have to the "but"?

William McGurn is a columnist for the New York Post.

Saving the Pledge

Vincent Phillip Muñoz

What can you do when the Supreme Court is wrong? Amend the Constitution? It's nearly impossible. Appoint new judges? That can take years and may not work. How about strip the Court of its jurisdiction? The House of Representatives voted to do just that in September 2004, when it passed the Pledge Protection Act. The legislation would prevent all federal courts from hearing cases that challenge the constitutionality of the Pledge of Allegiance.

Although unusual, such an act is clearly permitted by the Constitution. Article III, Section 2, provides that in cases outside of its original jurisdiction, "the Supreme

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Court shall have appellate Jurisdiction, both as to Law and Fact, with such Exceptions, and under such Regulations as the Congress shall make." The Constitution thus plainly grants to Congress plenary authority to make exceptions to the Supreme Court's jurisdiction.

The Framers never conceived of the judiciary as being completely independent. They equipped Congress with jurisdiction-stripping power so it could check the courts. Understanding that all power, including judicial power, is of an "encroaching nature" (Federalist 48), the Framers deliberately gave each branch of government the means to keep the other branches in line. But Congress has rarely exercised its full range of constitutional measures to check the courts. Those who decry the imperial judiciary may applaud the House for finally employing the jurisdiction-stripping power at its disposal.

Yet those who favor keeping "under God" in the Pledge should pray that the Senate quietly kills the Pledge Protection Act. Should it pass, the legislation may increase—not decrease—the likelihood that judges will find "under God" unconstitutional. The bill would prevent, moreover, the possibility of a decisive Supreme Court decision in favor of the Pledge.

Unlike a constitutional amendment, jurisdiction-stripping using Article III, Section 2, does not affect or overturn existing Supreme Court precedents. In practice it transfers final judicial authority from the United States Supreme Court to the court of last resort in each state. The tradition of *stare decisis* would likely lead these state courts to follow existing Supreme Court precedents. So if Congress strips all federal courts of jurisdiction over the Pledge, First Amendment challenges to "under God" will be decided by state supreme courts likely to apply existing Supreme Court precedents concerning the establishment of religion.

Therein lies the problem. Current Supreme Court precedents do not clearly support the constitutionality of "under God."

When the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals originally struck down the phrase in the 2002 *Newdow* case, it thoroughly demonstrated in its written opinion that none of the three leading judicial tests of religious establishment—the "Lemon," "Endorsement," and "Coercion" tests—can sustain a religious Pledge. When the Supreme Court denied Michael Newdow standing to sue last June, it merely overturned the Ninth Circuit's result. The Supreme Court's majority opinion did not challenge the Ninth Circuit's reasoning or suggest that the Ninth Circuit had misinterpreted existing precedents.

To complicate matters, the three concurring Supreme Court Justices who wrote separate opinions on *Newdow*'s merits failed to adopt a uniform rationale to defend the Pledge's constitutionality. Chief Justice Rehnquist stated that "under God" is "in no sense a prayer, nor an endorsement of any religion." Reciting the Pledge, he concluded, "is a patriotic exercise, not a religious one." Justice O'Connor craftily amended her "Endorsement" approach, adding a contrived four-part subtest to accommodate "under God." Justice Thomas implicitly rejected both Rehnquist's and O'Connor's arguments, conceding that "as a matter of our precedent, the Pledge policy is unconstitutional." A fair construction of the "Coercion" test, according to Thomas, requires the removal of "under God." He therefore concluded that the whole edifice of church-state jurisprudence should be torn down and rebuilt from scratch.

Where does this leave state supreme courts should the Pledge Protection Act become law and they have to decide a subsequent Pledge case? Hopelessly lost, no doubt, but also free to invoke different precedents to reach whatever results they want. Some state courts might invoke Justice Rehnquist's or Justice O'Connor's reasoning to uphold the Pledge. Others could, paradoxically, cite Justice Thomas' "Coercion" analysis (while ignoring his call to overturn it) and strike down "under God." Whatever state supreme courts decide, their verdicts could not be appealed to a federal tribunal. The result could be a myriad of confusing and conflicting state court decisions with "under God" constitutional in some states and unconstitutional in others. This is no way to save the Pledge.

Those favoring "under God" would be better advised to go on the judicial offensive and to get a new case before the Supreme Court. Justices Rehnquist, O'Connor, Thomas, and Scalia will vote to uphold "under God." If all four Justices remain on the bench, tremendous pressure would fall on each of the remaining Justices to become the decisive fifth vote.

That fifth vote likely would be Justice Anthony Kennedy. If the Pledge goes down, Kennedy will take the blame. In 1992 he devised the "Coercion" test in the school prayer case *Lee v. Weisman*. In *Lee*, Kennedy wrote that students who attend public school graduations that include prayers are "psychologically coerced" to participate in a religious exercise. Prayer at graduation violates the Constitution, Kennedy wrote, even if students are asked only to remain respectfully silent while others pray.

Michael Newdow won at the Ninth Circuit in part because Kennedy's 1992 opinion directly applies to public school recitations of the Pledge. As in *Lee*, Pledge recitations involve public school personnel

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directing students in a structured activity with explicit religious content. Even if the Pledge is patriotic (as Rehnquist suggests) or if it contains minimal religious content (O'Connor's claim), it still entails the affirmation that God exists. When public school teachers lead the Pledge in class, under Kennedy's test they "psychologically coerce" students to participate in a religious exercise. In fact, as Justice Thomas noted in his *Newdow* opinion, under the "Coercion" test, grade-school Pledge recitations pose a more clear-cut constitutional violation than graduation prayers. High-school graduations are one-time, non-mandatory events, and graduating seniors are almost (if not already) adults. Pledge recitations involve a daily recital by more impressionable grade-school children who are obligated by law to attend school. If a single nondenominational prayer in front of high school seniors at graduation is unconstitutional, so too is a teacher-led, daily recital by third-graders that explicitly refers to God.

When the Supreme Court reversed *Newdow* on narrow technical grounds, Kennedy was spared from facing the consequences of his own jurisprudence. He will not get off so easily the next time a Pledge case comes up. The most strategic way to save the Pledge would be to force Justice Kennedy to vote on its constitutional merits.

It's no secret that Kennedy is attentive to public criticism. Given the Pledge's overwhelming popularity among the American people and the fact that the nation's law-school elites have not rallied against it, if forced to cast the decisive vote Kennedy will likely vote to avoid bringing scorn upon himself. Unlike Justices Stevens, Souter, Ginsburg, and Breyer, moreover, he has never embraced the ACLU's "wall of separation" ideology. The conditions are ripe for Kennedy to support the Pledge.

Kennedy could most easily join an opinion that did not require him to admit the problems with his "Coercion" test. Justice Rehnquist offered one in *Newdow* by distinguishing *Lee*'s graduation prayer from the Pledge: since the Pledge is patriotic, Rehnquist argued, it does not "psychologically coerce" religious practice. The problem with this reasoning is that it assumes that patriotism and religion are mutually exclusive categories—that is, because the Pledge is patriotic, it is not religious. In reality the Pledge is patriotic and religious, but the niceties of clear analysis need not prevent Kennedy from joining Rehnquist.

A different line of reasoning that Kennedy might also find appealing would be to describe the Pledge as merely historical. Most of the briefs supporting the Pledge in *Newdow* argued that "under God" reflects the historical fact that the Founding Fathers believed that our rights and freedom come from God. While it is true that the Founders declared our rights to be endowed by the Creator, the obvious problem with this argument is that the Pledge is framed in the present tense and is recited as a personal affirmation. Students don't stand to pledge allegiance to the historical observation that the Founders believed we were "one nation, under God." Each individual pledges his or her allegiance to the flag and to today's American republic, which is described as "one nation, under God." Nothing in the text of the Pledge of Allegiance suggests that it is merely a history lesson. Nonetheless, Kennedy could easily sign on to the argument.

A third, and more sensible, way to defend the Pledge's constitutionality has been offered by Justice Scalia. Dissenting in *Lee*, Scalia interpreted the establishment provision of the First Amendment to prohibit "legal coercion" of religious belief or practice, "legal coercion" being defined as the use of force or penalties. Under Scalia's "legal coercion" standard, students could not be punished for not reciting the Pledge (for example, by being suspended from school), but the Pledge could be said voluntarily in public schools.

Kennedy eschewed "legal coercion" in *Lee* and would be unlikely to sign on to such an opinion now. But he would not need to embrace Scalia's approach for the Pledge to pass constitutional muster. Kennedy could write his own concurrence adopting one of the arguments mentioned above or he could follow O'Connor's revised "Endorsement" test. A Pledge victory requires only that he vote in its favor. But for Kennedy to vote at all requires that a Pledge case reach the Supreme Court, which is exactly what the Pledge Protection Act would prevent.

As evinced by its decision to hear two Ten Commandments cases during the 2004-05 term, the Supreme Court will continue to decide controversial religious liberty disputes. Congress is not going to strip the Court of jurisdiction over all church-state cases. It makes little sense for it to strip jurisdiction in the one area where the Court could reach the exact result Congress seeks to achieve.

A Supreme Court victory can never be guaranteed, but a Pledge challenge can be won. "Under God" should be protected. But how it is protected matters. Rather than take the case away from the federal judiciary, the issue should be brought to it, and the Pledge should be protected in all fifty states by the Supreme Court.

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Anglicanism Runs Aground

Douglas Farrow

The good ship Anglican, as Archbishop Robin Eames acknowledges in his preface to the Windsor Report, appears to many observers "to be set on a voyage of self-destruction." Indeed, Eames admits that "if realistic and visionary ways cannot be agreed to meet the levels of disagreement at present or to reach consensus on structures for encouraging greater understanding and communion in the future it is doubtful if the Anglican Communion can continue in its present form."

The aim of the Lambeth Commission on Communion chaired by Eames was to make proposals that might keep the ship afloat. It released its report at St. Paul's Cathedral on October 18, 2004, in a tumult of media speculation, Internet acrimony, and lawsuits over church property in American courts. The ninety-three-page report comes in four main parts. The purpose of the first two is to consider the nature of the Communion and of the threats it faces; the third and fourth sections address the future function of the Communion's four "instruments of unity" and offer specific proposals for negotiating the dangerous straits in which Anglicans now find themselves.

The Windsor Report succeeds at making no one entirely happy yet leaving everyone with something worth pondering. While it has been rejected as wrongheaded by, for example, retired American bishop John Spong on the one hand and Nigerian primate Peter Akinola on the other, it has been welcomed—albeit cautiously—by many on both sides of the dispute about homosexuality that has engulfed the Communion. Much now depends on the way it is received and deployed by those with decision-making power, and especially by the primates who meet in February to respond to it.

A careful reading of the report makes plain that the Spongs have better reason to be displeased than the Akinolas. The Commission did not address the issue of homosexuality but instead examined the Anglican understanding of communion and its attendant view of authority and responsibility. In attempting to articulate that understanding, the report applies Anglicanism's understanding of itself as an ecclesial community at once catholic and protestant. And both strands of this analysis—the appeals to tradition and to Scripture—are deftly woven together into a rational repudiation of the actions of the Episcopal Church (ECUSA) and of the Diocese of New Westminster in British Columbia that have occasioned the crisis. It is made entirely clear that these actions—the unilateral consecration of an openly gay bishop and the official blessing of same-sex relations in the face of a clear No from the rest of the Communion—are unjustified and have stretched to the breaking point "the bonds of affection" without which the Anglican polity must disintegrate.

We need not hold it against the Commission that rational arguments, with or without the support of Scripture and tradition, may gain little traction in the places mentioned. We may, however, question the adequacy of the Windsor Report in at least two ways. Before we do that, we must take note of its proposals and recommendations.

Briefly put, the proposals are these: (1) that there be a moratorium on the appointment of gay bishops and on the approval of same-sex blessings; (2) that the bishop of New Westminster, and those American bishops who participated in the consecration of Gene Robinson, be invited to withdraw from representative roles in the Communion until they have issued an apology for acting contrary to the principles of communion (it is not made clear what is to be done about Robinson, or whether the moratorium should extend to the ordination of homosexuals to lower orders—matters that lie, apparently, within the purview of autonomous provinces); (3) that meaningful alternative episcopal oversight be offered to dissenters within provinces or dioceses that have deviated from tradition, and that their property not be taken from them; (4) that bishops who have intervened without approval in other provinces or dioceses desist from doing so and express regret for the negative consequences of their actions.

The long-term recommendations are to strengthen the four existing instruments of Anglican unity and to add to them a fifth. The first instrument of unity is the Archbishop of Canterbury. The Report recommends that this office be "enabled to play a critical role at the heart of the Communion" and be given a new responsibility to "articulate the mind of the Communion especially in areas of controversy," to discipline fellow bishops by withholding invitations to councils, and to address disputes in or between other provinces, being aided in such tasks by a new Council of Advice. The second instrument of unity, the decadal Lambeth Conference, would be recognized as establishing through its key resolutions a hierarchy of authoritative teachings. Third is the Primates'

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Meeting, which would occur more frequently and take on greater executive responsibility as a standing committee of Lambeth. Fourth is the Anglican Consultative Council, with the Archbishop of Canterbury at its head. The report recommends as a fifth instrument of unity the recognition of common principles of canon law ("an unwritten *ius commune*")—and it recommends that this instrument be formalized in two ways: by adding to the canon law of each province a short section, drafted locally, dealing with external relations; and by adoption "of a common Anglican Covenant which would make explicit and forceful the loyalty and bonds of affection which govern the relationships between the churches of the Communion."

We need not ask here whether these proposals and recommendations are practical, or even whether the package as a whole will serve the Communion well as it seeks the delicate balance between the provincial autonomy on which Anglicanism has always been premised and the heteronomy without which nothing "catholic" is possible. Such a balance is obviously elusive and difficult to sustain. The immediately pressing question is whether the Commission's ad hoc proposals address the present emergency. Even among the Commission's members there is little optimism that suitable expressions of regret will be forthcoming, or that the necessary turning (may we not say "repentance"?) will take place.

This leads to further questions. The report was a unanimous one, but are its proposals rooted in a common understanding of the situation? Is that even possible, given its deliberate avoidance of the sexuality issue? Commission member N. T. Wright—the noted New Testament scholar and Bishop of Durham whose hand in the report is evident—afterwards likened the Commission's situation to that of Paul in Second (not First) Corinthians. On Wright's reading, it had no mandate to address the sexuality issue because that issue had already been addressed at the 1998 Lambeth Conference and by a recent Primates' Meeting, and thus the report did not need to spell out yet again that what the North Americans have done is not compatible with Christian doctrine and practice, nor would there have been much point in doing so. It needed rather to address "the second-order issue of what happens when a church has resisted such authority structures as it has." Is this really what Robin Eames meant when he wrote in the preface to the report that no judgment was demanded of the Commission on sexuality issues, but only a "consideration of ways in which communion and understanding could be enhanced where serious differences threatened the life of a diverse worldwide Church"? If there is a difference here, it makes a difference. Are we agreeing to come to agreement, or agreeing to disagree agreeably?

Many Anglicans suspect that the sharp divisions over homosexuality are tied to quite different gospels—or indeed different gods. But if any attempt to discuss the nature of communion without reference to the gospel must fail utterly, so also any attempt to discuss the recovery or "enhancement" of communion without reference to differences about the gospel cannot succeed. It may be asked, then, whether the Commission's mandate was a sound one, or whether it should have been interpreted more broadly, so as to include some examination of the issues that lie at the intersection of the gospel, communion, and sexual intimacy. Does the sacramental nature of marriage in the Christian tradition not invite and even demand some coordination of these loci?

It is safe to say that there is little or no hope of preserving Anglicanism in its present form if the underlying issues are not convincingly addressed. Communion is not fundamentally a creature of ecclesial process but a gift of the Spirit, mediated through the gospel of Jesus Christ and the sacraments of the gospel. What has to be decided, then, is whether the question of homosexuality in the Church is really a gospel question or not. The process of deciding that may be the one process that really matters, and about it the report says nothing at all except that the churches must continue to read Scripture together. Whatever has already been said at Lambeth or elsewhere, it does not appear to have succeeded in persuading fully even the Archbishop of Canterbury, who continues privately (or so it appears) to hold views on human sexuality at odds with the Christian tradition. But there is also a second way in which we must question the adequacy of the Windsor Report, and it concerns the office, not the person, of the Archbishop of Canterbury.

For all its talk of Anglicanism's preference for authority structures that, at the episcopal level, are more collegial than hierarchical, it is hard not to see in the Windsor Report a call for something that closely shadows the Roman church: a chief pastor and teacher, a Council of Advice if not a curia, synods with universal doctrinal authority, the integration of canon law, and so forth. Does it not begin to look as if Anglicanism is following, however hesitantly, the old trajectory of Western Christianity? The many Anglicans who are more protestant than catholic will find this worrying, particularly as they may have no better proposal to make. But a much more penetrating objection must come from the other side. It must

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surely be asked by what authority all this is to be done, and what ecumenical implications it will have.

This is not the place to examine the history of Anglicanism's transition from a reform movement in sixteenth-century England to this would-be catholicism. The point can be made from within the Windsor Report itself. One of its more controversial recommendations is the cease-and-desist order to bishops who have offered pastoral oversight to churches beyond their own diocesan or even provincial boundaries. An order forbidding "territorial invasion" as something profoundly un-Anglican may be necessary to shore up a collapsing polity and to defend the "bonds of affection" principle that provides the basis on which the report repudiates the actions of North American synods. Yet it is not possible to restrict the bonds of affection denominationally without denying the gospel of Christ. If episcopal disunity and competition is wrong between Anglicans, it is wrong full stop. Hard questions must therefore be asked about the very basis of diocesan logic and territorial claims within Anglicanism, or at all events within Anglicanism outside Britain. What is Anglicanism here in Montreal, for example, if not a product, however ineffective, of territorial invasion? The same question can be asked in many other places, even where such invasions did not follow on the heels of a conquering army or navy.

To fortify and extend this logic for an Anglicanism that now finds itself in need of more effective instruments of "catholic" unity, without even pausing to ask such questions, is theologically and ecumenically irresponsible. Perhaps the crew of the good ship Anglican needs to put in at the nearest Roman harbor, pick up a copy of the papal encyclical on ecumenism (*Ut Unum Sint*), and prepare to talk honestly about the situation.

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Just War, As It Was and Is

James Turner Johnson

The just war tradition came into being during the Middle Ages as a way of thinking about the right use of force in the context of responsible government of the political community. With deep roots in both ancient Israel and classical Greek and Roman political thought and practice, the origins of a specifically Christian just war concept first appeared in the thought of Augustine. A systematic just war theory came only some time later, beginning with Gratian's *Decretum* in the middle of the twelfth century, maturing through the work of two generations of successors, the Decretists and the Decretalists, and taking theological form in the work of Thomas Aquinas and others in the latter part of the thirteenth century. Later in the Middle Ages, and particularly during the era of the Hundred Years War, this canonical and theological conception of just war was further elaborated by incorporation of ideas, customs, and practices from the chivalric code and the experience of war, from renewed attention to Roman law, especially the *jus gentium*, and from the developing experience of government.

All this took place within a maturing theory of politics first outlined by Augustine in *City of God*, which conceived the good society as one characterized by a just order and thus one at peace both within itself and with other polities similarly justly ordered. Within this conception of politics the ruler's right to rule is defined by his responsibility to secure and protect the order and justice, and thus the peace, of his own political community and also to contribute to orderly, just, and peaceful interactions with other such communities.

The place of the justified resort to force within this overall conception was, for medieval and early modern thinkers alike, encapsulated in a verse from the Apostle Paul, Romans 13:4: "For [the ruler] is God's minister to you for good. But if you do evil, be afraid; for he does not bear the sword in vain. He is God's minister, an avenger to execute wrath on him that does evil." The use of armed force in this conception was thus both strictly justified and strictly limited: it might be undertaken only on public authority and for the public good. As Aquinas summed it up in the *Summa Theologica*, for a resort to the sword to be justified it must be on the authority of a sovereign, for a just cause rightly defined, and for a right intention, which included both avoidance of evil intentions and the positive aim of securing peace—peace understood, after Augustine, as *tranquillitas ordinis*, the tranquillity of a just political order. Elsewhere in the developing tradition limits were set on how such justified force might be used: certain classes of persons were normally to be treated as noncombatants and not to be harmed directly and intentionally in their persons or property, and lists were made of weapons not to be used because of their indiscriminate or especially deadly effect.

This was the tradition of just war in its classic form. Taking explicit shape in Christian theology and canon law, it was also a Christian tradition in a broader sense—the collected consensus of the Christian culture of the West on the justified use of force, set squarely within a normative consensus on the purpose of political order. This conception of just war was passed to the early modern age and known and used by such theorists as the Neoscholastics Vitoria, Soto, Molina, and Suarez, by the Protestant Reformer Martin Luther, the

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Puritan theologian William Ames, the theologically trained jurist Hugo Grotius, and others at the dawn of the modern era. For all of them it constituted the consensual normative wisdom.

Because of the cultural changes of modernity, however, the just war tradition has been carried, developed, and applied not as a single cultural consensus but as distinct streams in Catholic canon law and theology, Protestant religious thought, secular philosophy, international law, military theory and practice, and the experience of statecraft. Thus we find examples of the just war tradition in theorists of the law of nations and in positive international law; we have a form of this tradition in modern military codes, rules of engagement, and praxis; and two of the most important theorists of just war over the past forty years have been the Protestant theologian Paul Ramsey and the political philosopher Michael Walzer. All these streams of thought have also produced other normative conceptions of the political community, of the roots and responsibilities of government, and of the relations among such communities. In the modern context the just war teachings of the Catholic Church lie alongside the contributions of these other spheres to the developing tradition.

Yet it is one of the great losses of just war thinking—and of modern societies—that from the middle of the seventeenth century through the middle of the twentieth, creative religious efforts to think through the meaning and implications of this tradition have ranged from occasional to notably lacking. In Catholic thought the idea of just war remained as an element in canon law and moral theology, but largely without substantive development, almost as a historical artifact. Perhaps more important in the larger picture, the concept of just war became increasingly disconnected from ongoing developments in Catholic thinking about the proper purpose of political order and the proper institutions to embody that purpose. The Catholic theory of international relations, which had originally been framed in terms of the Augustinian understanding of political order, justice, and peace within and among political communities, became increasingly tied to developments in secular international law, as we see in such works as John Eppstein's *The Catholic Tradition of the Law of Nations*, published in 1935. Meanwhile, Protestant thought, influenced by the moral idealism and historical optimism of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, followed a similar course but moved closer and closer to a form of utopian pacifism in which war would be eliminated because of the increasing perfection of human social institutions.

The past forty years have brought a recovery of the idea of just war in Christian ethical discourse, and this has invigorated a larger engagement with the just war idea in policy debate, in the military sphere, in philosophical thought, and in dialogue between moral reflection and international law. As a result of these developments, just war debate is more robust and widespread than in any period since the mid-sixteenth to mid-seventeenth century, the age of Vitoria and Suarez and Grotius. But important elements of the connection with the earlier tradition, the idea of just war in its classic form, have been lost in much of this debate, including in recent Catholic thought. On the one hand, confusion has emerged between the Church's commitment to its teaching on just war and what has come to be called "the Catholic peace tradition," a tradition of avoidance or renunciation of participation in armed force historically associated with the religious life but, since the Second Vatican Council, made over into a case for pacifism for Catholic laity as well. On the other hand, a line of interpretation has developed that has been influenced by the secular philosophical concept of prima facie duties, by prudential (and contingent) judgments about the inherent immorality of contemporary war, and by well-intentioned but rather utopian investment in the United Nations system.

I will return to these themes below, but for now my point is a simple one: Catholic moral theology needs to reestablish a connection with the broader and deeper just war tradition, and especially with the form given that tradition in the classic period of its development. This is both important and necessary, in my view, for three fundamental reasons. First and most basic is the substantive reason: looking to the tradition in its classic form will bring Catholic thought on just war back into engagement with the conception of the use of force as a tool to be employed in the proper exercise of government to combat evil and other forms of injustice in the service of the public goods of justice, order, and peace.

Second, robust reflective engagement with the tradition of the Church is an essential element of the Catholic way to theological and moral clarity. Other elements are, of course, important as well: engagement with Scripture, philosophical reasoning, and reflection on empirical evidence. Protestant ethical reflection does all these as well, in different ways and with different emphases. But Catholic moral thought is distinctive because it holds that wisdom resides in the record of the Holy Spirit's interactions with the faithful through the history of the Church. For this reason one cannot be truly Catholic without respecting and seeking to understand the record of the tradition, and one cannot have a genuinely Catholic contemporary understanding of just war without a grasp of the

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Church's normative tradition on just war and its place in the theory of statecraft and international order.

Third, it is important for the broader contemporary just war debate for Catholic moral and political thought to reconnect with this normative tradition and to use that connection to advance and enrich that debate. Such enrichment is sorely needed. The conception of sovereignty as moral responsibility in the classic just war tradition contrasts importantly with the morally sterile concept of sovereignty in the Westphalian system. (Three centuries of experience with international relations stemming from the 1648 Peace of Westphalia have demonstrated that the principles of national sovereignty, territorial integrity, and noninterference in domestic affairs can, if interpreted in strictly procedural terms, conduce to protect tyrants while they oppress, rob, torture, and kill the citizens of their nations.) The conception of justice in a good social order as rooted in the nature of things and expressed through human moral responsibility for one another contrasts sharply with contemporary conceptions of justice, especially in international relations, as merely procedural, without substantive normative content. The conception of peace as an ordered tranquillity which must continually be worked for through history contrasts markedly with the utopian ideal of peace found in some religious and nonreligious thinking about the possibilities of international order, not to mention with the empirical reality of conflict within states and conflicts between states and nonstate actors in the contemporary world.

For a number of reasons Aquinas' formulation of the idea of just war provides a useful place to begin reengaging the classic just war tradition in its specifically Christian form. Let me identify three of the most important of these reasons. First, his formulation reflects and summarizes the debates of the previous century and a quarter, in which canonists and theologians collected, thought through, and systematically organized earlier normative Christian thought on the use of armed force. In particular, it exemplifies pithily and powerfully how Augustine's thought on Christian moral and political responsibility lies at the center of this developing tradition. Second, Aquinas' conception of just war was the reference point for later theorists at the beginning of the modern era, including both Catholic theorists such as Vitoria, Molina, Soto, and Suarez, and Protestants such as Luther, Ames, and Grotius. Understanding Aquinas' conception of just war is essential for understanding these critical figures. Third, Aquinas' conception of just war places the resort to armed force squarely in the frame of the sovereign's responsibility for the good of the public order. His three conditions necessary for a just resort to force—sovereign authority, just cause, and right intention—correspond directly to the three goods of the political community as defined in Augustinian political theory: order, justice, and peace. This conception thus provides a model for how contemporary just war thought should be set within a moral theory of good politics, both within and among societies. There is, of course, a great deal more to the recovery of the full scope of the just war tradition than the recovery of Aquinas on just war. But he is a good place to begin.

"For a war (*bellum*) to be just," Aquinas writes, "three things are necessary": sovereign authority, just cause, and right intention. The first thing we should note here is the concept of *bellum*, usually translated "war." In contemporary usage "war" has certain particular meanings which we may wrongly read back into his. In positive international law it refers to a specific relationship of conflict between or among states, and more broadly to "armed conflict" that may involve nonstate actors within states or across national borders. In the debates over humanitarian intervention in the 1990s some moralists made a distinction between "war," which they understood as having to do with state uses of armed force for their own interests, and intervention by military force for humanitarian purposes, which they regarded as altruistic and not "war." Thus in 1998 the United Presbyterian Church in the United States adopted a resolution that accepted uses of military force for humanitarian intervention only so long as there were no national interests being served; use of force for those interests was opposed. In some quarters "war" refers only to aggression by military force, to be opposed not by "war" but by "legitimate self-defense." In the post-September 11 American debate, critics have assailed the term "war on terrorism" as wrongly emphasizing military force and deemphasizing reliance on law-enforcement methods. And so on.

Bellum in medieval usage referred to any use of armed force by a sovereign ruler, whether this force was applied internally to that ruler's society or externally. Its opposite was *duellum*, use of force on private authority and thus presumptively for private purposes. *Bellum*, in the terms of just war theory, might be just or unjust, depending on circumstances; *duellum* could only be unjust. The roots of this distinction lie in Augustine's thought: the service of private ends by private persons manifests *cupiditas*—wrongly directed, self-centered love or motivation—while efforts by those at the head of communities to serve the good of those communities show the effect of a concern for justice informed by *caritas*, rightly directed love. (It is for

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this reason, I suggest, that Aquinas places his discussion of just war in the context of his treatment of the virtue of *caritas*.)

Sovereign authority. Only a person in a position of responsibility for the good of the entire community may rightly authorize the use of the sword. Anyone not in such a position who resorts to the sword, for reasons however lofty, is guilty of disturbing the public good. The only exception to this is the use of arms in response to an attack under way or immediately offered, but even this allowance disappears when public authority is at hand to combat this evil. So the authority of a sovereign is necessary for a just war, because we are here talking about *bellum*, the only kind of resort to the sword that may be just. That Aquinas puts this requirement first is not accidental but follows from the logic of the concept of just war being set out: only uses of force by sovereign authority have the potential to be justified; thus this is the primary criterion. Moreover, it is an element in the sovereign's responsibility for the public good that he must weigh the cause offered to determine whether it is just and must use force so as to manifest right intention. The Neoscholastics usefully elaborated on this responsibility, including within it the sovereign's responsibility to weigh the cause and his responsibility to get advice from knowledgeable persons; yet ultimately, responsibility for the decision about whether to use force rests with the sovereign alone.

Just cause. In listing the just causes for war Aquinas named two, citing them by means of a quotation from Augustine: recovery of that which has been wrongly taken, and punishment of evil. Not explicitly named here is the sole just cause for a state's resort to force on its own authority that is clearly allowed in our contemporary positive international law: self-defense against an attack under way or clearly imminent. The canon law from Gratian onward had included such defense in its listing of just causes for resort to arms, citing Isidore of Seville as the source. Aquinas surely knew the canonists on just war, so his omission of one of the three just causes recognized by the canon law needs some explanation. Keeping in mind the importance of Romans 13:4, Alfred Vanderpol has argued that for Thomas, and Scholastic just war theory in general, punishment of evil was the overarching just cause for resort to armed force, so that defense against attack was included within this category. This is, I think, close to the mark, but I suggest that Vanderpol has the relation reversed. Within the logic of Aquinas' just war theory, defense of the common good—protecting just order and therefore peace—is the central rationale for just war as a whole. Punishment of evil and retaking that which has been wrongly taken are thus two specific justifying causes within this larger conception of defense of the common good.

That Aquinas does not follow the canonists in explicitly naming defense against attack as a just cause for resort to force follows, I suggest, from his commitment to this larger conception of defense. Of course, the sovereign has the right to authorize resort to the sword in defense against attack under way or immediately offered; even private persons have such a right. But Aquinas does not build up a conception of defense as just cause on the basis of the private right of self-defense; rather, he builds down from his overall conception of the sovereign's responsibility for the good of the political community. Insofar as the need for defense provides just cause for public use of the sword, it comes from the responsibility of government to protect order, justice, and peace, not simply from the right to respond to an attacker in kind.

For a variety of reasons, including most importantly the change in the idea of sovereignty to the Westphalian model of a nation-state's territorial integrity, the development of international law on the state's right to use force has proceeded in the opposite direction, focusing on the right of self-defense. Recovery of that which has been wrongly taken and punishment of evildoing are not explicitly named as justifications for the use of armed force by states in international law, but arguably they have been subsumed into the concept of self-defense: the former being recast as defense against an armed attack still in progress, as in the recovery of Kuwait from Iraq in 1991, the latter being recast as the right of retaliation. In any case, we see that there are some significant differences between the idea of just cause in the classic just war tradition and contemporary international law. It may be that moral reflection on the former provides a useful critical perspective on the latter.

Right intention. The third necessity Aquinas names for a just resort to arms is right intention. If one reads recent Catholic just war thinking one regularly finds the idea of right intention collapsed into just cause or used to reinforce that moral requirement, as in this formulation from the Catholic bishops of the United States: "Force may be used only for a truly just cause and solely for that purpose." For Aquinas the requirement of right intention is much more than this. He treats this requirement in two ways, negatively and positively. Negatively, he rules out evil intentions, exemplified in Augustine's list from *Contra Faustum*: "What is evil in war? It is not the deaths of some who will soon die anyway. The desire for harming, the cruelty of avenging, an unruly and implacable animosity, the rage of rebellion, the lust of domination and the

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like—these are the things which are to be blamed in war." Positively, right intention is the purpose of establishing or restoring a disordered peace, or as Augustine puts it: "We do not seek peace in order to be at war, but we go to war that we may have peace." Both the positive and the negative aspects of right intention are included in this third quotation, which Aquinas draws from the canon law (but wrongly ascribes to Augustine): "True religion looks upon as peaceful those wars that are waged not for aggrandizement, or cruelty, but with the object of securing peace, of punishing evildoers, and of uplifting the good."

Right intention, then, as defined by Aquinas, includes both the avoidance of wrong intention and the positive aim of securing peace. It does not simply reduce to a restatement or reinforcement of the requirement of just cause. Rather, it focuses on two other things: the state of mind of the one who authorizes the war and those who fight under that authorization, and the fundamental moral purpose for all uses of force—to achieve the peace that comes only with a justly ordered community. So once again, his conception of just war takes us back to the conception of politics within which—and *only* within which—the resort to armed force may be both justified and necessary. This is the full meaning of just war according to Aquinas.

Recent Catholic thought on war has, as I suggested earlier, diverged in important respects from the classic understanding of just war. The differences can be seen across a variety of official and nonofficial statements of the Catholic perspective in recent debates over uses of military force. Let me identify three important expressions of this divergence. First, in a phrase invented and popularized by the United States Catholic bishops, Catholic just war thought is represented as beginning with a "presumption against war," so that the function of the just war criteria is redefined as only to overturn this "presumption" in special cases. Second, the logic of the classic just war tradition is reversed, so that within the *jus ad bellum* several recently invented prudential criteria are employed as if they were the most important, with correspondingly diminished attention to the fundamental deontological criteria, those described as "necessary" by Aquinas. Third, the context has shifted: in contrast to the traditional Catholic conception of the political community, and politics within such communities, as the means of achieving real if limited justice for human life in the world, and a corresponding theory of international relations, recent Catholic thought on war often treats the state as a locus of injustice and the goals of particular states as inherently at odds with the achievement of common human goals, while an internationalism defined in terms of the United Nations system is proposed as the best means to those common goals. I will address each of these in turn.

The question of the "presumption against war." The idea that Catholic just war teaching begins with a "presumption against war," more recently phrased as "a strong presumption against the use of force," first appears in the United States bishops' widely read 1983 pastoral letter, *The Challenge of Peace*. In the context of its original adoption, this conception had three important roots. First, it reflected a judgment about modern warfare as inherently grossly destructive, so much so that it could never be conducted morally or be an instrument of moral purpose. In the immediate context of *The Challenge of Peace* this conviction was focused specifically on the question of nuclear weapons and whether they might ever be morally used; the United States bishops' answer was No, and in this they concurred with a wide range of opponents of nuclear weapons around the world. Though in certain ways this pastoral letter drew on the thought of Paul Ramsey, the statement (without mentioning him by name) explicitly rejected Ramsey's conception that even in the case of nuclear weapons the key issue is human moral control: Ramsey argued for the possibility of a rational, politically purposive use of nuclear weapons—namely, counterforce warfare—while the U.S. bishops rejected any and all possible "war-fighting" uses and plans for use of such weapons. Their conclusions about the likely result of any war involving nuclear weapons mirrored Jonathan Schell's contemporaneous image of global nuclear destruction and the end of human life: a "republic of insects and grasses," as he famously put it in *The Fate of the Earth*.

While the United States bishops focused on nuclear war, a more general judgment about modern war as inherently unjust had been present in Catholic thought since at least 1870, the year when a group of bishops, in a *Postulata* addressed to Pope Pius XI and the First Vatican Council, excoriated the expense of "huge standing and conscript armies" and the prospect of "illegal and unjust wars, or rather hideous massacres spreading far and wide." The subsequent experience of the two World Wars reinforced, for many, this judgment on modern warfare. The generic term for this form of opposition to war as such is "modern-war pacifism," with "nuclear pacifism" being one of its specific forms. One root of the idea of a "presumption against war" was thus this kind of judgment against modern war as such. The widespread nature of this judgment is likely one of the reasons this "presumption against war" concept, original to the United States

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Catholic bishops, has since 1983 become more broadly accepted as descriptive of the just war idea.

The problem with this conception of gross destructiveness as inherent in modern warfare, though, is that it is a contingent judgment being made to do service as a permanent truth. By contrast to the model of the two World Wars, as well as to imagined models of global nuclear holocaust, the actual face of warfare since 1945 has been that of civil wars and regional armed conflicts. Such armed conflict has indeed been bloody, sometimes genocidal, sometimes terroristic, always characterized by violence directed toward noncombatants; yet there has been no "World War III"—or rather, given the ubiquity of this kind of conflict, this is in fact the face of "World War III." The destructiveness of these recent wars has everything to do with the choices made by those who fight them and nothing to do with any alleged inherent destructiveness of modern weaponry. In other words, the modern-war pacifists get it wrong: their contingent judgment does not describe a permanent truth about warfare in the modern age. The morality of modern war, as of all war, depends on the moral choices of those who fight it. It is not the choice to fight that is inherently wrong, as the "presumption against war" argument has it; it is the choice to fight for immoral reasons and/or by immoral means.

In its original context the second important root of the presumption against war was a formulation of this concept of just war set out in the Jesuit journal *Theological Studies* in 1978 by James F. Childress, an American academic ethicist of Quaker background. In this article Childress formulated just war theory in terms of the logic of prima facie duties as defined by the philosopher W. D. Ross. Childress argued that war is fundamentally morally problematic, as the killing in war goes against the prima facie duty of benevolence, which rules out killing or inflicting harm on other persons: "[B]ecause it is prima facie wrong to injure or kill others, such acts demand justification." In just war theory the function of the various criteria is to provide this justification or, as Childress also puts it, to "overrule" the prima facie obligation. *The Challenge of Peace*, without reference to the logic of prima facie duties, replicates the structure of Childress' argument exactly: just war theory begins with a presumption against war, and the just war criteria function to override this presumption (or to show that it should not be overridden) in particular cases.

The problem with basing a just war theory on the logic of an ethic of prima facie duties is that it has nothing to do with Catholic just war tradition. Childress' argument is an interesting thought experiment, useful if there were no tradition of just war from which contemporary debate on war and morality might take its bearings, but his argument takes no account whatever of that tradition. Even though it borrows the tradition's terminology (such terms as "just war" and "right intention"), it tries to redefine the content of those terms to fit the paradigm of prima facie duty. The result is something quite different from the Catholic concept of just war.

The third root of the U.S. bishops' recasting of the Catholic conception of just war as beginning with a presumption against war was the pragmatic need to find a compromise between proponents of traditional Catholic just war theory and those Catholics who, under a variety of influences, had come to regard their faith as opposing war altogether. This opposition was distinctly different from the "modern-war pacifist" position, though adherents of both found they could make common cause in opposing contemporary warfare. That Catholicism could be regarded as pacifist is in many ways an odd notion, but the adherents of this position argued that the Second Vatican Council, in calling for the spirituality of the religious life to be expanded among the laity, implicitly extended the traditional non-involvement in war of the religious to all faithful Catholics. A "Catholic peace tradition" was described which blurred or erased the historical (and doctrinal) distinction between the "higher" morality of the religious and the "lower" morality of the laity.

There is, to be sure, a Catholic peace tradition, in the sense that there is a strong tradition denying the right of the sword to clergy and religious and assigning to the latter the obligation to pray for the realization of God's peace. But there is also a tradition, that of just war, which describes the moral obligations of those in secular life, including those with the responsibilities (under God) of temporal rule, and the possibilities of peace in this world before the triumph of the City of God. This latter tradition is the tradition that includes the Augustinian conception of good politics as a just, and thus peaceful, social order; an associated conception of international relations; and the idea of just war defining the instrumentality of the just use of force in the service of both. On these points, the 1997 *Catechism of the Catholic Church* gets it exactly right:

> Respect for and development of human life requires peace. Peace is not merely the absence of war, and it is not limited to maintaining a balance of powers between adversaries. Peace cannot be attained on earth without safeguarding the goods of persons, free communication among men, respect for the dignity of persons and peoples, and the assiduous practice of fraternity. Peace is "the

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> tranquillity of order." Peace is the work of justice and the effect of charity (§ 2304).

There is no presumption against war here. Nor do I find one in Pope John Paul II's strong words about the obligation of humanitarian intervention—that such humanitarian intervention may be "necessary where the survival of populations and entire ethnic groups is seriously compromised." In the Catholic conception of just war, the use of force may be necessary to right wrongs and to establish peace. To forget this, or to rework the just war idea so that it is nothing more than a set of rules for overriding a general judgment that force in itself is morally suspect, is to change the substance of the tradition.

The problem with trying to reconcile these two conceptions of Catholic ethics regarding war—the "peace tradition" of the religious life and the just war tradition of secular life—is precisely that they are so fundamentally different. Historically and conceptually these two ethics were distinct: they applied to people in two distinct walks of life; one had to do with ultimates, the other with historical realities. In Catholic understanding there should be no conflict between them, because they operate on different planes. The description of Catholic just war teaching as beginning with a presumption against war and ending with criteria whose function is to say when, if ever, that presumption can be overridden is faithful to neither of these Catholic traditions, that of the religious life or that of just war.

The problem of the prudential jus ad bellum *criteria.* As we have seen, Thomas Aquinas' *jus ad bellum* consists of the requirements of sovereign authority, just cause, and right intention, including the purpose of peace, often listed as a separate requirement in recent just war thought. These are also the requirements recognized by the Neoscholastics and by early Protestant thinkers on just war. In recent writing on just war, however, it has become the norm for three prudential criteria to be added: last resort, the expectation that the good done by the resort to force will outweigh the evil (the criterion of overall proportionality, to be distinguished from the *jus in bello* requirement of proportionality), and a reasonable hope of success. Exactly when and under what circumstances these began to be used is unclear. John Eppstein, writing *The Catholic Tradition of the Law of Nations* between the World Wars, argues that proportionality and last resort are to be found in the arguments of the Neoscholastics, but the texts he cites do not clearly make the case. It is likely, I suggest, that these prudential criteria reflect the same uneasiness with modern war that gave rise to modern-war pacifism. Arguably they are elements in the prudent exercise of statecraft, but including them as specific requirements of the *jus ad bellum* is a comparatively recent development.

Once they are there, though, the question is how they are to be used. My own judgment is that they should be understood as supportive criteria, secondary to the primary deontological requirements. This understanding retains the fundamental logic and the priority of the classic just war criteria while providing a structured role for prudential exercise of statecraft. On this model, resort to force is justified only when it is undertaken by sovereign authority, for a just cause, and with a right intention, including the purpose of establishing or restoring peace. By consideration of the prudential criteria, then, the sovereign authority determines whether the use of force already determined to be justified is in fact wise to undertake. It may not be. Not everything that is morally justified is prudent to do. But to determine that a particular use of force is imprudent is not the same as determining that it would be unjust.

Recent just war thought, though, has included many examples of using the prudential criteria as if they alone permitted one to judge the justice of a war. Consider this from former United States President Jimmy Carter, writing in the context of the debate in 2003 over whether the United States should use force to end the Saddam Hussein regime in Iraq: representing himself as "thoroughly familiar with the principles of a just war," Carter went on to list those principles as he understands them: last resort, "with all nonviolent options exhausted"; discrimination, proportionality "to the injury we have suffered"; legitimate authority, and a peace superior to what exists. The two classic just war requisites listed, legitimate authority and the end of peace, are listed last here, behind last resort, proportionality, and the *jus in bello* principle of discrimination, which here does duty as a *jus ad bellum* requirement.

The problem is not just with non-Catholics or secular policy types. Consider the following from the *Catechism*. After reducing the just causes for resort to force to one, self-defense (§ 2308), the *Catechism* further limits this in § 2309 by four prudential conditions, all of which it says must be satisfied: "the damage inflicted by the aggressor on the nation or the community of nations must be lasting, grave, and certain; all other means of putting an end to it must have been shown to be impractical or ineffective [last resort]; there must be serious prospects of success; the use of arms must not produce evils and disorders graver than the evil to be eliminated. *The power of modern means of destruction weighs very heavily in evaluating this condition"* (emphasis added). The section concludes, "These are the traditional elements enumerated in what is called the 'just war' doctrine."

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Now, it is possible to read these requirements in the way I suggested earlier: as supplemental to the fundamental requirements of the classic just war tradition as enumerated by Aquinas and others. But somehow right intention, including the end of peace, has been forgotten here, and these prudential requirements are represented as themselves being "the traditional elements in what is called the 'just war' doctrine." Moreover, how is it possible to read the reference to "the power of modern means of destruction" without recalling the role of this judgment in leading to the novel idea of a presumption against war? In this section I believe the contemporary *Catechism* has lost sight of an important part of the just war tradition.

As these examples show, the prudential criteria can be used in such a way as to displace the deontological requirements of classic just war tradition. Another problem arises when they are used as a springboard to a functional pacifism. Consider again the case of the United States Catholic bishops, this time in their official opposition to the use of armed force to eject Iraq from Kuwait after Saddam Hussein's army had aggressively annexed that country in 1990. Testifying before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Archbishop John R. Roach, speaking on behalf of the bishops conference, held out the prospect of an indiscriminate air war, a conflagration that would spread to the entire Middle East, and a result that might leave "the people of Kuwait, the Middle East, and the world" worse off than if force had not been used.

Since the people of Kuwait had already had their country taken from them and were being systematically robbed and brutalized, it is hard to imagine how, realistically, they could have been made worse off by a use of force to eject the occupiers. And Roach's references to the Middle East carry the message that he assumed that the use of force against Saddam Hussein's military would produce a regional conflagration. As to the people of the world, Roach did not mention the international-law argument against aggression or anticipate the Security Council's declaration that Iraq was guilty of aggression and was a threat to international peace and security.

In short, I do not see how Archbishop Roach's use of the prudential criteria here can be read in any other way than as to seek to prevent the use of force in the face of the most obvious case of international aggression since World War II. Of course there were others at the same time making similar claims, just as President Carter made them a decade later in the context of another debate over the justness of the United States' use of force against Saddam Hussein's Iraq. But that underscores my main point: that the contemporary use of the prudential criteria of last resort, proportionality, and reasonable hope of success treats them as if they were the main themes in the just war idea. Such an interpretation magnifies the evils to be expected from a resort to force, regardless of any arguments for the justice of the cause, and thus transforms the presumption against war into a functional pacifism. Once more, the just war tradition deserves better.

The state as the problem. It is no secret that the state system has been under attack by various kinds of critics for some time. Among the many positions taken by these critics, the argument most relevant to our present theme is that the rise of international institutions under the umbrella of the United Nations system represents the leading edge of a new global system of government that has superseded the state in important respects, including the right to judge when resort to armed force is legitimate.

Is this argument correct? It is, at least, apparent that the debates about humanitarian intervention by military force in the last decade, about the creation of international criminal tribunals in a number of cases, about the idea of a state's "universal jurisdiction" in cases of violations of the Genocide Convention or other "crimes against humanity," about how far the global war on terror may proceed without violating the rights of states, and most recently, about the United-States-led use of force against the Saddam Hussein regime in Iraq, have all raised important points of positive and customary international law, and that in every one of these cases the outcome remains unsettled.

The current international system has its ideological roots in the Enlightenment and is closely tied to the advocacy of such a system as a way of achieving what Kant called "perpetual peace." In the context of Enlightenment-inspired optimism about the possibility of perfecting human institutions in history, this became a utopian form of pacifism in which the right kind of international institution would mean the end to all war. The United Nations system itself expresses this ideal. Formed in the immediate aftermath of World War II, the United Nations in its Charter embraced the goal of ending war and sought to implement this by the method already tried in the 1928 Pact of Paris (also called the Kellogg-Briand Pact), despite its inability to prevent the German and Japanese aggression that initiated the war whose shadow lay over the Charter. But though Article 2 of the Charter sought to outlaw any use of armed force between or among states except in defense against aggression, it did not clearly define what counted as aggression—a matter that remains unsettled, as the recent debate over what counts as legitimate preemption testifies. Moreover, in Article 51 the Charter

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explicitly permitted individual and collective resort to force in self-defense, thus reaffirming the centrality of the idea of self-defense in customary law, but without doing anything to limit the rights of states to decide when they are threatened and thus able to resort to force in defense.

Finally, in Chapter VII the Charter gave the Security Council the power to authorize force in cases of threats to international peace and security, without clearly defining what such threats might look like and without taking account of the fact that the states who are members of the Security Council at any given time might have different views on this matter because of their own perception of their national interests. The United Nations is far from being a world government. Its efforts to limit and restrain the use of force depend importantly on the decisions taken by individual states, and its management of world crises has sometimes been so inept as to raise the question whether, in its institutional incarnation, it is at all able to achieve the goals of its Charter.

Relentlessly negative portrayals of the nation-state as an institution both disregard the positive attributes and accomplishments of the state system and ignore specific differences in how particular states are constituted and how they have behaved. In the internationalist realm, this criticism of states is often accompanied by an equally uncritical attitude toward the possibilities of international order as expressed in the United Nations. The United Nations has admittedly been the a locus of some success in establishing an international order based on high moral values. Yet it has also had conspicuous failures. With respect to its responsibilities regarding the use of armed force, I suggest that its failures are the result of fundamental limitations embedded in its character as an international organization: it is not, in the language of an earlier generation of political thought, a perfect political community. It lacks in itself the attributes necessary to make it capable of effectively playing the role stipulated in its Charter. It lacks cohesion, so that its policies and decisions have led to inconsistency in the conflicts it has addressed. It lacks sovereignty, so that it depends on agreements among its sovereign member states. It lacks accountability to the people whose rights and dignities it professes to represent. It lacks an effective chain of command for military forces it may wish to deploy in a conflict, which means such forces cannot be an effective arm of international statecraft.

In terms of the just war tradition regarding the just use of force, its most important defects are those stemming from the lack of sovereign authority. Since without such authority there is no entity competent to determine just cause, exercise right intention, aim at the establishment of peace, and control armed forces in accord with the moral limits of the *jus in bello*, this lack of sovereignty means that the United Nations as an institution cannot have a *jus ad bellum* in the fundamental just war sense. Legally, the lack of these characteristics undermines the positive-law definition of just cause whereby certain rights are reserved to the Security Council while being denied to individual states or other organizations or groupings of states.

All this is not to say that states themselves as a category or as individuals always conduct themselves according to the highest standards. Many states fail one or more of the standards just mentioned, and many fail in their obligation to secure the good of their people. But international organization has not superseded the state; for it to function well, it must depend on states that function well.

Traditional Catholic thinking about international relations was based on an older understanding of and appreciation for individual political communities as the loci within which a social order embodying justice in all its aspects might be established and maintained, thereby securing peace as the tranquillity of that just order. No other human community, on this conception, has such a character. Because of the responsibilities of the political community its leadership possessed certain powers and rights, including those of the use of force. Some recent comments by officials of the Holy See have expressed the position that today only the Security Council can legally authorize and morally legitimate the use of armed force in the pursuit of peace, security, and order. As I noted above, this is not clear in contemporary debate over the meaning of positive and customary international law, and the case for this position must be argued, not merely asserted. I suggest that within the Catholic context the proper frame for such argument is a normative understanding of good statecraft in the service of the goods that the political community exists to secure.

I conclude by identifying four particular challenges to be met in recovering the classic just war tradition for moral reflection, policy, and action regarding the use of armed force today. In doing so, I highlight what is implicit in what I have said thus far. The first three correspond to the three requisites found in classic just war tradition for a just resort to armed force—requisites we have seen through the lens of Aquinas' just war theory. The fourth challenge arises from how war is conceived, for this is fundamental both for the question of a just resort to force and for right conduct in the use of such force.

The first challenge is to recover the moral element in

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the classic just war conception of sovereign authority: a conception of sovereignty as responsibility for the common good. This conception contrasts importantly with the Westphalian conception of sovereignty as rule over a particular territory and the people it contains, a conception embodied in the United Nations system of international order. This latter understanding embodies real benefits, but it also has glaring faults. As far too many historical examples have shown, it gives cover to individuals and parties who use the powers of rule to menace and oppress their own people and others while seeing to no higher end than their own aggrandizement. Something is very deeply flawed in a conception that casts the mantle of sovereign protection over demonstrably evil rulers as diverse as Mobutu, Milosevic, Saddam Hussein, and Kim Jong Il. The classic just war conception of sovereignty as moral responsibility provides a frame within which good rule can be distinguished from bad, for encouraging the best and critically addressing the worst, with promise for a more morally robust understanding of the international order.

The second challenge is to examine in depth what should count as just cause for use of force in the contemporary context. The classic just war tradition gives us three benchmarks: recovery of that which has been wrongly taken, punishment of evil, and overall defense of the common good. How can and should these benchmarks provide guidance in the present confused debate, with rival claims being made on behalf of the limits on just cause provided in the United Nations Charter, a well-developed sense that resort to force by individual states is not only proper but even obligatory to end and remedy egregious abuses of basic human rights, and a newly invigorated conception of the right of states to defend themselves in the face of the evils of terrorism and the proliferation of nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons? I have my own ideas on this, but my point here is that this question needs to be seriously engaged. All these claims are worth taking seriously, and all have their often passionate partisans. It is not enough simply to endorse or dismiss one or another of these disparate conceptions of the right use of force before they have all been examined. To reengage the classic just war tradition is to take a principled path to creative moral reflection on these various claims and the debate among them.

The third challenge is to examine closely and weigh carefully the question of right intention in any use of armed force. The classic tradition rightly held that not all uses of armed force are morally equivalent: some are wrongly motivated, while others aim at right. The two aspects of the concept of right intention address these two opposite possibilities. Such intention in the classic just war tradition, as we have seen, includes the avoidance of wrong intentions, which easily translate from Augustine's list into familiar contemporary evils: aggressive war for the aggressor's sole benefit; wars for reasons based on religious, ethnic, or ideological difference; use of force aimed at terrorizing or oppressing those on whom it falls for the benefit of the wielder of power. At the same time, right intention means that the resort to force should be aimed at restoring peace where it has been disordered or establishing it where it has never been. I suggest that this means that for any use of force to be justified, it should not only respond to the disordering or absence of peace but should also include concrete plans for creating a peaceful society in the aftermath of conflict. Thinking in this way requires giving up on the idea that all uses of force are morally equivalent because all force is evil. It also carries important implications not only for individual states that employ force for just cause but also for the responsibilities of other states in the international order and for that order as a whole.

The fourth challenge is to confront realistically the face of contemporary war. Earlier I identified, in order to fault it, the conception that all modern war is inherently indiscriminate and disproportionate in its destruction, so that modern war as such must be opposed. Such a conception of modern war is the root of the idea that just war theory, at least today, must begin with a presumption against war. The sort of war envisioned has as its models the carnage of the trenches in World War I, the bombing of cities in World War II, and the expectation of global catastrophe that would result from a superpower nuclear war. This conception of war also has as its villains the states who engage in it, so that states, instead of being potential sources of human good, are recast as the agents of massive evil. The influence of this understanding of war can be easily identified in recent debates over particular uses of force. But as I have noted, the actual face of recent warfare differs markedly from this, as it involves civil wars, uses of force by non-state actors, and massive harm to the innocent not from the use of horrific weapons but because they are made the direct targets of weapons ranging from knives to automatic rifles to suicide bombs. The actual villains here are not states as such but regional warlords, rulers who oppress their people to maintain or expand their power, and individuals and groups who use religious or ethnic difference as a justification for oppression, torture, and genocide. This is, as I suggested earlier, the real "World War III," not a repeated and more horrible update of the London Blitz or the bombings of Dresden and

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Hiroshima. Those who claim that "modern war" is inherently unjust seem to me to have missed all this.

They also seem to me to have missed something else that is very important. As progressively shown in the Gulf War of 1990-91, the bombing of Serbia over the oppression of the Albanian Kosovars, the campaign in Afghanistan aimed at al-Qaeda and the Taliban, and most recently (and most fully) in the recent use of armed force to remove the Saddam Hussein regime in Iraq, the United States, and to an important degree also the British, have channeled high technology in ways that allow war to be fought according to the actual principles of the just war *jus in bello*: this includes avoidance of direct, intended harm to noncombatants and avoidance of disproportionate harm in the use of otherwise justified means of war. The results, for those who care to look at them, are simply astonishing, especially by contrast to the level of destruction and the harm to noncombatant lives and property found, say, in carpet-bombing. This, too, is the face of modern war.

Today we see a new kind of confrontation. On the one hand, we see non-state actors, as well as warlords and heads of state who use relatively unsophisticated means to gain their ends by targeting, terrorizing, and killing noncombatants and, as in the destruction of the World Trade Center towers or the bombing of the Madrid trains, intentionally causing lasting property damage, civilian deaths, and widespread fear. On the other hand, we find a state that has used its intellectual and economic capital to develop weapons, tactics, strategies, and training directed toward maximizing discrimination and proportionality in the use of armed force. Both of these developments in the actual face of war need to be taken seriously and integrated into a contemporary moral assessment of war based on a recovery of the classic meaning of the just war tradition. FT

The Episcopal Priest Cleans Out His Office

After the years of tear-drying and tissue-passing,
the closed-door conferences above reproach
and beyond remembrance, he packs files of sermons,
reread books, thank-you notes and complaints,
receipts from now-broken air conditioners
that can't cool this fear
that swirls up the unexpected
dust of the lives
he thought he saved. They don't want him here,
near the new.

He boxes up truth, turns to leave
a few prayers, inconspicuous as seeds,
that someone old might read in the folds
of a missal, someone young might turn
over in her still-holy fingerpainting hands,
near that warm corner on the east side of the parish
where children congregate to play "This is the church;
this is the steeple; open the doors and where are the people?"

He leaves the door unlocked,
the icons waiting.

Marjorie Maddox

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The Deist Minimum

Avery Cardinal Dulles

As Christianity spread throughout the Greco-Roman world, it became apparent that the biblical doctrines concerning God, morality, and future retribution had similarities with the philosophical speculations of the Platonists, Aristotelians, and Stoics. The Fathers and medieval theologians had no difficulty in admitting this; on the contrary, they saw it as a confirmation of the truth of revelation. Human reason at its best, they explained, is able to discover some of the doctrines that God revealed through the prophets and Jesus Christ.

This being granted, revelation was still necessary for two reasons. First, because even the naturally knowable truths were attained only by a few, and by them with great difficulty and a considerable admixture of error. Second, because certain truths very important for salvation could not be attained in any other way than by revelation accepted in faith. Among the truths in this second category were the Trinity, the Incarnation, the redemptive death of Christ on the Cross, his Resurrection and Ascension into glory, the institution of the Church, the sacraments, the bestowal of grace, and the beatific vision. Human reason could find solid reasons for believing the Christian revelation, but in the end the believer had to make a free and trusting commitment to the word of God. In that sense, faith was above reason.

The position on faith and reason that I have just sketched is not simply that of ancient or medieval Christianity. It remains, by and large, the standard position held today, with varying nuances, by Catholics, Orthodox, Anglicans, and many Protestants. Revelation is relatively necessary to know religious truths that lie within the grasp of reason and is absolutely necessary to know strict mysteries.

In the seventeenth century an alternative position was put forward in England by Lord Herbert of Cherbury (1583-1648). He maintained that revelation was unnecessary because human reason was able to know all the truths requisite for salvation. In this list he included three primary truths: the existence of God, the moral law, and retribution in a future life. God, according to Lord Herbert, had implanted in the human soul from the beginning five innate religious ideas: the existence of God, divine worship, the practice of virtue, repentance for sin, and personal immortality.

Shortly after its invention by Lord Herbert, deism received indirect support from the physics of Isaac Newton (1642-1727) and the philosophy of John Locke (1632-1704). The physical world, according to Newton, was explicable in terms of "insurmountable and uniform natural laws" that could be discovered by observation and formulated mathematically. By mastering these laws human reason could explain cosmic events that had previously been ascribed to divine intervention. The beauty and variety of the system, Newton believed, was irrefutable evidence that it had been designed and produced by an intelligent and powerful Creator. Close though he was to deism, Newton differed from the strict deists insofar as he invoked God as a special physical cause to keep the planets in stable orbits. He believed in biblical prophecies, but rejected the doctrines of the Trinity and Incarnation as irrational.

Newton's close friend John Locke, though not a deist, supplied an epistemological grounding for deism more plausible than the innatism of Lord Herbert. Beginning with human experience of the external world, he accepted a version of the argument from causality that demonstrated, as he thought, the existence

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of God as the uncaused Necessary Being, eternal, all-powerful, and all-knowing. Locke also believed in Christian revelation on the ground of biblical prophecies and miracles. But he held that reason should be the ultimate judge of all truth and that the firmness of our assent to any proposition should not exceed the strength of the evidence that we could produce in its favor. It followed that revealed truths, which rested on indirect proofs from reports in Scripture and tradition, were less certain than things known directly by reason. He rejected certain Christian doctrines such as the Trinity and the Incarnation, which in his judgment failed to meet the test of rational coherence. But, as I have said, he regarded himself as a Christian because he accepted Jesus Christ as the Messiah foretold in biblical prophecy; he had no difficulty in admitting the miracles ascribed in the Bible to the prophets and to Jesus.

From Locke's system it was but a small step to deism. In 1696 his disciple John Toland published the book *Christianity not Mysterious,* in which he attributed the mysteries of Christianity to pagan conceptions and the machinations of priestcraft. In 1730 another disciple, Matthew Tindal, published the book *Christianity as Old as Creation*, in which he sought to demonstrate that all rational creatures have access to "a law of nature or reason, absolutely perfect, eternal, and unchangeable; and that the design of the gospel was not to add to, or take from this law," but only to rescue humankind from superstition. Tindal's work, more radical than Toland's, came be used as a kind of Bible of deism. Both Toland and Tindal were Christian deists; they accepted revelation but maintained that it was nothing more than a republication of the religion of pure reason. Reason alone, they believed, could establish the fundamental truths necessary for salvation.

Three forms of deism may be distinguished, at least schematically. The first, most friendly to faith, admitted two channels of truth: reason, which gave access to the essential and necessary truths, and revelation, which communicated certain supplementary truths, useful but not essential for salvation. According to the second version, revelation was an aid to reason, but it could do no more than confirm or clarify truths accessible to reason alone. The most radical form held that reason was the sole font of truth and that revelation was nonexistent.

English deism spread rapidly to the continent, especially to France, where it was taken up by Voltaire, d'Alembert, and other Encyclopedists. Many of them tended to radicalize the system and use it as a weapon against revealed religion and especially against the Catholic Church.

The deist outlook also gained a foothold in the American colonies, where it became popular among the rich and well-born about the time of the Revolution. Of the fifty-six signers of the Declaration of Independence, the theological leanings of some twenty have been identified. Three have been characterized as deists: Benjamin Franklin of Pennsylvania, Thomas Jefferson of Virginia, and Stephen Hopkins of Rhode Island. Two others, John Adams of Massachusetts and George Wythe of Virginia, are described as liberal Christians strongly influenced by deism. Four, including Jefferson's friend Benjamin Rush, were liberals not inclined toward deism. About eleven were definitely orthodox believers. Samuel Huntington, Philip Livingston, and John Witherspoon, president of Princeton University, were prominent in this last group.

Among the founders of the American republic who were not signers of the Declaration of Independence, George Washington, James Madison, and George Mason were religious liberals leaning toward deism. Samuel Adams, Patrick Henry, and Alexander Hamilton were generally orthodox Christians opposed to deism.

None of the Founding Fathers meditated more assiduously on religion than Thomas Jefferson (1743-1826). He was brought up in the rituals and traditions of the Anglican Church, as it existed in Virginia at the time. In his college years at William and Mary he came to admire Francis Bacon, Isaac Newton, and John Locke as three great paragons of wisdom. Under the influence of several professors he converted to the deist philosophy. He made a careful study of the philosophical writings of Viscount Henry Bolingbroke, a strict deist whose God was remote and unconcerned with human affairs.

In his public pronouncements as a statesman and legislator, Jefferson expressed what he considered to belong to the common and public core of religion. He kept his more personal opinions to himself, refraining from putting them in any writing that might find its way into print, but he occasionally penned confidential memoranda for himself and a few friends.

Jefferson's public religion appears in the Declaration of Independence, which refers to "the laws of Nature and Nature's God," to "inalienable" rights conferred upon all human beings by their Creator, and to "the protection of divine Providence." In his first inaugural address, in 1801, Jefferson spoke of how the American people were "enlightened by a benign religion, professed indeed, and practiced in various forms, yet all of them inculcating honesty, truth, temperance, gratitude, and love of man, acknowledging and adoring an overruling Providence." In his second inaugural, four years later, he emphasized the nation's need for the favor and enlightenment of Providence and asked his hearers to

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unite with him in supplication to "that Being in whose hands we are."

One of Jefferson's firmest principles, as we know, was that of religious freedom. In 1777, as a legislator, he composed what later became the Virginia Statute on Religious Freedom, which embodies his personal conviction that the government should exercise no coercion in religious matters. In his famous letter of 1802 to the Danbury Baptist Association he referred to the "wall of separation between Church and State"—a term that had previously been used by the Baptist Roger Williams. But as we have seen, he did not hesitate to bring religion into his public pronouncements. As President he frequently attended religious services in Congress. While opposing a federal religious establishment, "he personally encouraged and symbolically supported religion by attending public church services in the Capitol," as Daniel Driesbach has written.

Like his contemporaries Franklin, Washington, Adams, Hamilton, and Madison, Jefferson was convinced that the republic could not stand without a high level of public morality, and that moral behavior could not survive in the absence of divine authority as its sanction. Obedience to the teachings of Jesus and reflection on the purity of Jesus' life could enable people to overcome their selfishness and parochialism.

Jefferson's friend Joseph Priestley (1733-1804) maintained that the authentic teachings of Jesus were vastly superior to those of Socrates or any other pagan but that they had been overlaid by a thick cover of legend and mythology, which must be stripped away for the truth to shine forth in its pristine brilliance. Priestley's work made a deep impression on Jefferson and enabled him to regard himself as a Christian. Following in Priestley's footsteps, Jefferson undertook to retrieve the true teachings of Jesus, especially in matters of morals. To this end he made two compilations of texts concerning Jesus from the New Testament. The first, entitled *The Philosophy of Jesus*, was completed in 1804 but has been lost. The second, which he called *The Life and Morals of Jesus*, is usually known as the Jefferson Bible. It was composed in his later years and published only after his death. Omitting all references to the miraculous and the supernatural, Jefferson selected what he took to be authentic sayings of Jesus as a moral teacher. The precepts of the Nazarene, he asserted, were "the most pure, benevolent, and sublime which have ever been preached to man." The religion of Jesus, he believed, was so simple that it could be understood by a child, but the writers of the New Testament, especially Paul, overlaid it with mythology derived from Platonist sources. The sage of Monticello forthrightly dismissed dogmas such as the Trinity and the Incarnation, which he found unintelligible.

Jefferson's religion, however, was not purely philosophical. For a living religion, he knew, scope must be given to the inclinations of the heart. He was enraptured by the beauty of the Psalms, which in his opinion surpassed all the hymnists of every language and of every time, including the hymn of Cleanthes to Jupiter so much admired by his friend John Adams. When he attended church services as an old man, the sounds of familiar hymns would bring tears to his eyes.

In his plan of studies for the University of Virginia Jefferson wanted natural religion to be taught to the exclusion of all doctrine attributed to revelation. But he knew that religion could not be purely academic and therefore recognized the importance of worship in the churches. He took pride in the fact that students at his university had opportunities to worship in Episcopal, Presbyterian, Methodist, and Baptist services in the sanctuary at Charlottesville. Interdenominational competition, he believed, was the best protection against fanaticism. In matters of religion the aphorism "united we stand, divided we fall" had to be reversed. Divided we stand, he said, but united we fall.

In summary, then, Jefferson was a *deist* because he believed in one God, in divine providence, in the divine moral law, and in rewards and punishments after death, but did not believe in supernatural revelation. He was a *Christian* deist because he saw Christianity as the highest expression of natural religion and Jesus as an incomparably great moral teacher. He was not an *orthodox* Christian because he rejected, among other things, the doctrines that Jesus was the promised Messiah and the incarnate Son of God.

Jefferson's religion is fairly typical of the American form of deism in his day. But a vocal minority of American deists were, like many of the French Encyclopedists, opposed to Christianity. Thomas Paine, the most famous of this group, was often accused of atheism, but he, like Voltaire, believed in God the Creator. Even radical deists like Paine agreed with Jefferson and Franklin that without belief in God and in a future life, morality in society could not be sustained.

In the closing decades of the eighteenth century, deism in the United States, as elsewhere, seemed to be sweeping everything before it. But early in the nineteenth century, the deist tide began to recede. The first half of the nineteenth century witnessed a significant revival of Christianity, both Protestant and Catholic. The preachers of the second Great Awakening were especially successful in rural America, where they aroused a highly emotional biblically based religion. While Unitarianism survived and even experienced some growth in New England, it lost its specifically deist features: the sharp dichotomy between faith

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and reason, the deductivist natural theology, the separation between God and the world, and the idea of Jesus as teacher of the natural law. Deism therefore may be said to have perished, not only in the United States but also in England, France, and Germany.

We can discern several reasons why deism, which once looked so promising, proved unable to sustain itself. Deism drew its vitality from the oppressive policies of the religious establishments against which it was reacting. In the minds of the Enlightenment thinkers, confessional religion, unless checked by law or by free competition, led inevitably to tyranny and persecution. But this assumption was based on a time-conditioned union or alliance between throne and altar, not on the gospel of Christ, which gave Caesar no authority over the things of God.

Jefferson himself came gradually to this realization. As a young adult he seems to have held that Christian faith was favorable to despotism and hostile to free society. But his friend Benjamin Rush convinced him that Christianity and republicanism were, so to speak, made for each other. As Eugene Sheridan has written, Rush regarded Christianity as "part of a divine plan to bring about the kingdom of God on earth by freeing mankind from the burden of royal and ecclesiastical oppression through the spread of the principles of human equality and Christian charity." With Rush's help Jefferson found a way of accepting Christianity without diminishing his commitment to the freedom of conscience. Deism, therefore, was not necessary to offset religious oppression.

By the middle of the twentieth century the major branches of Christianity accepted the principle of religious freedom not as a reluctant concession but as a requirement of the gospel itself. The Catholic Church in its "Declaration on Religious Freedom" (*Dignitatis Humanae*) teaches that the gospel itself demands that "in matters religious every manner of coercion on the part of men should be excluded." A major factor in the rise of deism has therefore ceased to exist.

Although deism portrayed itself as a pure product of unaided reason, it was not what it claimed to be. Its basic tenets concerning God, the virtuous life, and rewards beyond the grave were in fact derived from Christianity, the faith in which the deists themselves had been reared. It is doubtful whether anyone who had not been brought up in a biblical religion could embrace the tenets of deism. The children of deists rarely persevered in the faith of their parents.

Deism also suffered from grave philosophical weaknesses. Its leading proponents were pamphleteers such as Toland and Tindal in England and Encyclopedists such as Diderot in France. They lacked the metaphysical principles needed to build a viable natural theology. Empiricists like Locke and rationalists like Newton lacked the rich ontology of Thomas Aquinas and the medieval schoolmen. Their epistemology was a shallow empiricism and their cosmology a universalized physics, both of which crumbled when faced with the penetrating critiques of David Hume and Immanuel Kant.

Additionally, the deist system suffered from some internal tensions. If there is an omnipotent God, capable of designing the entire universe and launching it into existence, it seems strange to hold that this God cannot intervene in the world He had made or derogate from the laws He had established. He might have good reasons for bestowing some added benefits not contained in the work of creation. American deists such as Jefferson and Franklin did not rule out all divine intervention. They were convinced that God punished evil and rewarded virtue both in this life and in the next. They also encouraged prayer in ways that seemed inconsistent with deism in its pure form.

If God was infinite in being, moreover, it was unreasonable to reject the notion of mystery. It would seem quite natural to suppose that there are depths of the divine being surpassing all that could be inferred from the created world. We cannot know what is going on in the minds of our fellow human beings unless they manifest it by word or deed. How much less, then, could we grasp the thoughts of God unless He were to disclose them to us by revelation? Since God knows far more about Himself and His plans than His creatures do, it is difficult to see why He could not reveal truths hidden from reason that would be important for persons such as ourselves. Throughout the centuries Christianity has held that central articles of faith, such as the Trinity, the Incarnation, and the atoning death of Christ, are revealed truths. We can understand them to some extent even if we cannot penetrate the full richness of their meaning.

Yet more, the deist God, who ceased to be active after launching the world into existence, seemed to be a useless vestige of the God of biblical religion. If God never intervened in the world, His existence could only be, from a human perspective, superfluous. It would be pointless to pray to Him or expect any blessings from Him. The pupils of the deists, carrying the critique of religion one stage further, questioned the existence of this idle Supreme Being. Thus deism came to be a halfway house on the road to atheism. Toland drifted gradually from deism into pantheism. Voltaire was unable to dissuade his erstwhile allies Diderot and d'Holbach from abandoning the deist camp and embracing atheism. In the United States atheism sur-

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faced more slowly but was defended in the nineteenth century by Robert Ingersoll among others.

Yet another weakness in the deist system was the time-conditioned nature of its cosmological underpinnings. The system presupposed the static unalterable order of nature that appealed to mathematicians like Isaac Newton. But as the positive sciences matured, the universe appeared to be far less orderly than the deists had assumed. Eventually the Newtonian system would be superseded by the theories of Darwin and Huxley, Einstein and Heisenberg. William Paley's depiction of God as the cosmic watchmaker lost its plausibility.

Deism also failed as a religion. Its static deity was a pallid reflection of the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jesus Christ. The religion of the New Testament and of orthodox Christianity offered hope and consolation that lay far beyond the powers of deism. The gospel assures us that God never ceases to be active in the world: He freely calls us to Himself, hears our prayers, and enriches our lives with His grace. The doctrine that God became man in order to raise us to a share in His own divine life satisfied a deep desire of the human heart to which deism could not respond. It was impossible to enter into communion of life and love with the cold and distant God of deism.

Finally, the deist reconstruction of the historical Jesus lacked any serious foundation in biblical research. Jefferson claimed that it was "obvious and easy" to distinguish the authentic words of Jesus from those attributed to him by later Christians. In his view they were "as easily distinguishable as diamonds in a dunghill." But even the most confident members of the Jesus Seminar today would make no such claim. Jefferson fell into the common error of simply projecting onto Jesus the moral ideals of his age.

An older contemporary of Jefferson, the German deist H. S. Reimarus (1694-1768), composed a lengthy *Defense for the Rational Adorers of God*, fragments of which were posthumously published by Gotthold Lessing in 1778. His fragment on "The True Aims of Jesus and His Disciples," apparently unknown to Jefferson, was the first serious effort to reconstruct the life and preaching of Jesus with the tools of critical history. Although he was a deist himself, Reimarus did not attribute his own philosophy to Jesus. On the contrary, he regarded Jesus as a deluded apocalyptic preacher who shared the Jewish expectations of his day about the imminent arrival of the kingdom of God.

The long history of the quest for the historical Jesus that dates from Reimarus has overthrown the liberal humanitarian portrait. All the available sources point to a figure totally unlike the enlightened moral teacher postulated by Franklin and Jefferson. The teaching of Jesus, as reported in the earliest testimonies, is inextricably bound up with his messianic or divine claims and with the miraculous deeds by which he vindicated them. The belief and evangelizing fervor of the apostles cannot be accounted for without reference to the claims of Jesus, his miracles, and his bodily resurrection. Benjamin Rush pointed out to Jefferson his failure to address these objections, but Jefferson was unresponsive.

Because of these and other weaknesses, deism deserved to perish as it did, but it did not die without leaving a valuable legacy. Its influence on the American tradition has been enduring, beneficial and, one might say, providential. Although the Founding Fathers refrained from enshrining the particular theses of deism in official documents or public speeches, they composed these statements in such a way as to affirm the vestiges of faith that still survived in Christian deism without excluding more robust forms of Jewish and Christian faith.

Our American republic has therefore had what, following Jean-Jacques Rousseau, we may call a civil religion. Rousseau enumerates the positive dogmas of such a religion as follows: "the existence of a mighty, intelligent, beneficent divinity, possessed of foresight and providence, the life to come, the happiness of the just, the punishment of the wicked, and [Rousseau added] the sanctity of the social contract." The civil religion of this country has been expressed in our national institutions and in the great pronouncements of our national heroes, most notably Abraham Lincoln.

The dominance of civil religion produced a favorable climate in which the various forms of biblical religion could and did thrive. Although the United States was never, in the technical sense, a Christian nation, it has been and remains a nation in which the biblical faiths are at home and in which other religions are welcome, provided that their tenets and practices are not a threat to public order. Deism by itself was too dry and abstract to elicit warm adherence, but the American consensus always surrounded the positive teachings of deism with the flesh and bones of specific faiths, whether Protestant, Catholic, or Jewish. The American civil religion can still be heard in the pronouncements of recent Presidents, but it is now being eroded or at least threatened by the increasingly pluralist shape of American society and by a judiciary that is reluctant to support or encourage any form of religion, however generic.

Today, therefore, we are faced with new questions. Can the biblical religions maintain themselves and win new adherents or must they resign themselves to becoming a minority? Should the American consensus be modified to make room for a broader pluralism?

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Can Islam, the Eastern religions, New Age religion, and even agnosticism and atheism, find equal acceptance in American society?

Jefferson would probably have insisted on the positive articles of deism as a required minimum. For him and the other Founding Fathers, the good of society requires a people who believe in one almighty God, in providence, in a divinely given moral code, in a future life, and in divinely administered rewards and punishments. He and they expected that the example and teachings of Jesus, as known from the Gospels, would be accepted in principle by the great majority of citizens. Although Jefferson wanted the state to refrain from meddling in the particulars of religion, he counted on families, churches, and educational institutions to perpetuate and disseminate in more vivid and concrete forms the basic truths also taught in his moderate form of deism.

If he were alive today, Jefferson would doubtless ask himself whether the welfare of the republic can stand in the absence of the minimal consensus I have described. If pluralism goes unchecked, will the nation still have a corporate vision sufficient to sustain the sense of mission and collective purpose that have characterized it at its best? Will factionalism, corruption, violence, and aimlessness proliferate? Each of us must strive to answer these questions as best we can with the help of the Sage of Monticello. FT

Letter from Ty'r Glyn

I write to you from Wales, my last address,
  confirmed now in the idleness
which age and fortune here have brought me to:
  not quite the expected end, though you
guessed long ago what kind of end it would be.
  My second autumn, and the dark sea
howls on the rocky headland, drowns in spray
  the cottages along the bay.
Hoarse, inarticulate, its wintry sighs
  are caught up by the wind and rise
anarchic round the house, my bleak domain.
  As I look out, I see the rain
come swirling over the roofs; the black slates shine.
  We've had the best of the weather. Brine-
stink, weed-rack, boats laid up: another year
  is dying. What was it brought me here
you ask? This house? That stand of holly and oak
  through which my chimney's blue-grey smoke
ravels and skirrs? These mountains? These blank bays?
  Endlessly the salt wind frays
at the field's edge where gorse and ragged thorn
  crouch among rocks, endless the yawn-
ing waters, the wild gulls crying at the land's end.
  (What is the doom these things attend
now, as at the unshuttering of time?)
  Often at evening I will climb
steep Gwyddel's back to stand upon that height
  and watch the tide-race roaring white
between the darkening island and the shore.
  —Was it this I came here for,
the moon's power and the wind's made manifest
  in tide-rip, in wave-crest?

Clive Watkins

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The Laughter of the Philosophers

David B. Hart

My favorite "whimsical" anecdote about a philosopher goes like this: Arthur Schopenhauer once threw an old lady down a flight of stairs. (Note how the first line immediately seizes one's attention.) He claimed it was an accident, of course, but I for one prefer to believe that it was nothing of the sort, and that in fact he took the defenseless crone by her wizened weasand and—with full malice aforethought—flung her over the balustrade to the landing below, uttering a curse as he did so (it more nearly accords with my general impression of the man). Not that he acted without cause; he was never given to caprice. The old lady was a cleaning woman who had made too great a clamor outside his rooms, a transgression than which (as anyone familiar with his essay on noise should know) nothing could have vexed him more; and it was only when his rebukes were met by intolerable impudence that he resorted to force. Curiously, however, the magistrate failed to see the justice in his actions, and sentenced him to pay the woman a monthly pension for the rest of her natural life, which somewhat straitened his finances. When she was finally considerate enough to die, and Schopenhauer saw the notice in the morning obituary, his only reaction was to reach for his pen and write in the margin: "*Anus obit, onus abit*" (the old woman dies, the debt departs).

The reason this grim little tale so amuses me (quite apart from the magnificent pun, which one hopes was purely extemporaneous), is that the lives of philosophers are so often oppressively, obtundently dreary that any diverting story—even one as macabre as the ordeal of Schopenhauer's poor old *Putzfrau*—comes to the scholar as a cherished respite. And, for the most part, the works of philosophers mirror the shapes of their lives. The sublime spiritual sterility of the texts of Kant's philosophical maturity, for instance, could scarcely provide a more perspicuous glimpse into the personality of perhaps the single most boring man ever to darken a wigmaker's doorway. The leaden, caliginous bombast of Hegel's prose was a pure emanation of his grindingly pompous soul. The turgidity of Derrida's attempts at playfulness were little more than clinical specimens of his insufferable self-infatuation. As a general rule, to put it simply, if one wanders into one's library in search of mirth, good fellowship, or wit, one does well not to seek out the company of the philosophers.

There are exceptions, however, and none more notable than Søren Kierkegaard. In some sense, indeed, Kierkegaard's life could be written as a kind of dark comedy; despite his premature death, and a great number of sadnesses that afflicted him along the way, there was something enchantingly absurd about his character, a certain benign perversity that often prompted him to make himself willfully ridiculous, and a peculiarly touching element of the ludicrous that clung to him all the way to his early grave. Few philosophers' lives can boast comic (or, for that matter, tragic) material comparable to Kierkegaard's aborted engagement to Regine Olsen, the bizarrely

The Humor of Kierkegaard

By Thomas C. Oden
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exaggerated symbolic significance he attached to it, his firm expectation of death before the age of thirty-four on account of some unnamed sin of his father's, his intentional provocation of a feud with the satirical review *The Corsair*, or his splenetic quarrels with the Danish Lutheran church (and so on).

And he had wit. It is said that once, for instance, as he came to a stream spanned by a bridge so narrow that two men could not cross it abreast, nor pass one another upon it, a truculent bourgeois arrived at the bridge's other end and—recognizing Kierkegaard—promptly announced that he would not stand aside for an infamous buffoon. "Ah, yes," replied Kierkegaard, unperturbed, stepping back with a ceremonious sweep of his arm, "I, however, shall." And, of all the diverting tales that can be told about Kierkegaard, none is really any more terrible than that: if he was ever cruel, it was principally to himself, and he managed to live out his brief but prolific philosophical career without once (if you can credit it) feeling the need to heave an elderly charwoman into a stairwell. Moreover, happily, he was possessed not only of wit, but of literary genius; and for this reason he is one of that blessed and select company of modern philosophers whose writings can be read purely for the pleasure they afford.

Thomas Oden's generous anthology, *The Humor of Kierkegaard*, is a sequel to his deservedly popular collection of 1978, *Parables of Kierkegaard*. Unlike its predecessor, though, it is—in Oden's own words—intended "as entertainment with no noble purpose." But it is also, in a sense, a compilation of evidences, offered in support of a very large claim. In his introduction, Oden throws down a "gauntlet": he challenges the reader to assemble a collection of passages from any ten major philosophers as funny as those he has compiled from Kierkegaard's writings; furthermore, he makes bold provisionally—until this challenge is met—to declare Kierkegaard "as, among philosophers, the most amusing." Now, as I have intimated already, I am prone to regard this as a distinction rather like that of owning "the finest restaurant in South Bend, Indiana": the quality of the competition renders the achievement somewhat ambiguous. Despite which, I am not entirely convinced that Oden makes an incontrovertible case. He does, I think it safe to say, prove that Kierkegaard was probably the most amusing of Danes, but (again) the quality of competition must be taken into account.

Indeed, in his introduction, Oden advances his claim with such vigor and so many proleptic cautions that one might be pardoned for suspecting that he is trying to compensate for some deficiency in the material. While he acknowledges that there is something absurd about offering a theoretical rationalization or justification of humor, he does nevertheless—more as a concession, apparently, to editorial pressure than out of personal inclination—provide a long treatment of the Kierkegaardian theory of comedy. Oden himself urges the impatient reader to skip these pages, and I am almost tempted to recommend impatience to the reader, lest all good will be defeated long before Kierkegaard's voice has even been heard. Oden proceeds here at a very deliberate pace, as no doubt a scholar must, and this often obliges him to illustrate a point by quoting some amusing passage from Kierkegaard's work only then to offer an inevitably ponderous explanation of the joke. This sort of thing, in sufficient quantity, can quickly ruin one's appreciation of what follows.

This is not to say—I hasten to add—that Oden says nothing of interest at this point. He offers much to ponder. What I gleaned from these pages, in part, is that for Kierkegaard the roots of the comic lie in the inherent contradictoriness of human nature: soul and body, freedom and necessity, the angelic and the bestial, eternity and temporality, and so on. Moreover, I learned how profound a difference Kierkegaard saw between genuine humor and mere irony. That is to say, irony can certainly recognize that the incongruities that throng human experience typically frustrate the quest for truth; but, having seen as much, irony is then impotent to do anything more than unveil failure and vanquish pretense. Humor, on the other hand, is born from an altogether higher recognition: that tragic contradiction is not absolute, that finitude is not only pain and folly, and that the absurdity of our human contradictions can even be a cause for joy. Humor is able to receive finitude as a gift, conscious of the suffering intrinsic to human existence, but capable of transcending despair through jest. And this is why the power of humor is most intense in the "religious" sphere: Christianity, seeing all things from the perspective of the Incarnation (that most unexpected of peripeties), is the "most comic" vision of things: it encompasses the greatest contradictions and tragedies of all, but does so in such a way as to take the suffering of existence into the unanticipated absurdity of our redemption. Which yields the—to my mind—gratifying conclusion that, to be both a "lover of wisdom" and an accomplished humorist, one must almost certainly be a Christian; or, rather, that only a Christian philosophy can be truly "comic."

Again, though, there are times when theory should be touched upon only very lightly. Kierkegaard's writings—taken in themselves—provide Oden with wonderfully rich sources of plunder, especially the early pseudonymous works, with their thickets of prefaces,

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interludes, interjections, postscripts, appendices, multiple voices, and preposterous names, not to mention their sinuous coils of indirection. And Oden displays a keen eye for the comic and lyric *trouvailles* to be reaped from them. He is clearly a man whose long acquaintance with these texts has endowed him with an enviable knowledge of their bounties, and a deep enthusiasm for their complexities and subtleties. *Either/Or* emerges as the most fertile and delightful of Kierkegaard's literary achievements in this regard, though almost all the early books abound in comic invention. And, as a whole, this collection can be recommended, for light or serious reading alike. That said, while I enjoyed this anthology thoroughly, I nevertheless came away from it still somewhat unconvinced regarding Oden's high claims for Kierkegaard; and I find myself still inclined to ask whether Kierkegaard was really the nonpareil humorist that Oden makes him out to be.

For me, this is a question with a special significance. I confess I am one of that minority of readers who admire Kierkegaard more for his literary and satiric gifts than for his contribution to philosophy—which I regard as dubious—or his understanding of Christianity—which I regard as, in many significant respects, disastrously false. While I acknowledge his importance as an inspiration to later thinkers, and am conscious of how eagerly he was absorbed, midway through the last century, into the genealogy of "Existentialism" (perhaps the most annoying philosophical movement to arrive on the continental scene before the advent of post-structuralism), I cannot honestly profess immense admiration for his speculative gifts. I think his critiques of Hegel, for instance, obvious at best, monotonously superficial at worst. As for his place among Christian thinkers, I think it a fairly minor one. As much as I approve of his contempt for polite, liberal, rationalized, and innocuous faith, his actual critique of "Christendom" often seems surprisingly barren and unsubtle. And, for all the initial appeal exercised by his talk of Christian "paradox," I think it a meretricious and misleading appeal in the end.

For such as me, Kierkegaard the humorist—or novelist, or aphorist, or ironist—possesses an unquestioned eminence, whereas Kierkegaard the philosopher—or theologian, or pietist, or polemicist—cuts a far more equivocal figure. This might dispose me happily to accede to the claim Oden wishes to make did it not also dispose me to judge the evidence he presents somewhat inconstantly, depending on which aspect of Kierkegaard's mind is reflected in any given selection. And, as it happens, my verdict on the material collected here is distinctly mixed; but I do not think it a verdict dictated solely by personal predilections.

Simply said, this anthology is too long. None of it lacks literary charm, that is certain; but much of it lacks any actual comic element. Of course, Oden does rightly caution the reader against imposing contemporary standards of humor on Kierkegaard, and I would add that it would be a mistake to impose upon him any of one's customary expectations of a humorist from any period; the reader who takes up this volume anticipating something on the order of Jonathan Swift, Charles Lamb, Max Beerbohm, or S. J. Perelman will unquestionably be disappointed. Nevertheless, one cannot help but feel that, in some instances, Oden has attempted to wring water out of stones.

This is not, certainly, to deny the comic brilliance of many of the passages gathered here. There is, for instance, a genuinely hilarious reflection on how embarrassing it is that there is so marked an absence of the Chinese in the Hegelian system, while not a single German assistant professor is excluded. And there is a wonderful passage where Kierkegaard likens the prospect of being excommunicated from the Danish church to the discovery that, though he is in Copenhagen, he is being given a thrashing in the distant town of Aarhus. Elsewhere he likens a pastor gesticulating vehemently over a mundane matter to a man proclaiming he would give his life for the fatherland and then adding, with full pathos, "Indeed I would do it for ten rix-dollars!" And there is one passage I especially liked (though it comes from a period in Kierkegaard's authorship of which I am not overly fond):

> [I]n modern drama the bad is always represented by the most brilliantly gifted characters, whereas the good, the upright, is represented by the grocer's apprentice. The spectators find this entirely appropriate and learn from the play what they already knew, that it is far beneath their dignity to be classed with a grocer's apprentice.

A somewhat greater number of passages, however, could be described only as mild witticisms:

> So let the history books tell of kings who introduced Christianity—I am of the opinion that a king can introduce an improved breed of sheep and railroads, etc., but not Christianity.

This is vaguely amusing, perhaps (even though the sentiment it expresses is entirely and damnably false), but is it worthy of anthologization? And there are other passages that might perhaps—and then only if one were desperate to justify their inclusion in this

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volume—be described as "wry," such as one long and splendid (though not really humorous) portrayal of the boredom that afflicts the ironist. And there are still other passages that are so earnest, however charming they may be, that I cannot believe that any humor was intended at all.

Oden also has a curious habit of including excerpts whose only distinction is that they contain somewhat involved metaphors—a journey from Peking to Canton, one thief accusing another to the police, a merchant momentarily given false hope as he watches his ship founder at sea, an emperor choosing a day-laborer as his son-in-law, the difference in value between a pound of gold and a pound of feathers, a corpse still able to perform some of the functions of a living body—as if such metaphors were intrinsically humorous. Perhaps the most enchanting metaphorical passage in the entire collection concerns a young seamstress—I lingered over it for some time—but there is nothing amusing about it in the least.

The most dispensable selections are drawn largely from the late polemical writings, particularly the *Attack Upon Christendom*. Here, even where an attempt has been made to amuse, the humor is so often irascibly joyless that it comes across not as Christian mirth, but simply as irony embittered with sanctimony; and too much of it is written in a voice that is strident, vitriolic, and ulcerated, not so much prophetic as petulant.

> The result of the Christianity of "Christendom" is that everything . . . has remained as it was, only everything has assumed the name "Christian." . . . The change is . . . that the whorehouse remains exactly what it was in paganism, lewdness in the same proportion, but it has become a "Christian" whorehouse. A whoremonger is a "Christian" whoremonger.

This is shrill and tiresome. Yes, in fact there *are* "Christian" whorehouses, and whoremongers, and whores, and they are nothing like their pagan predecessors, because the formation of conscience within even a defectively Christian culture is something altogether novel; the whorehouse is now full of sinners, whose memories necessarily bear the impress of moral grammars and spiritual promises that the pagan order never knew, and who in consequence may yet awaken to their sin, and who may even find themselves at unexpected moments haunted by charity or tormented by grace. And it is the repeated failure of Kierkegaard to understand just this that makes his treatment of the whole question of Christendom finally so boring—and so humorless.

What, then, of Oden's gauntlet? Clearly I think that he has been a mite too avid in searching out passages to corroborate his argument, and that he would have done better to produce a volume of perhaps a hundred pages. Still, though, he may have proved his point. Who, after all, are Kierkegaard's rivals? Plato had as ready a wit as Kierkegaard's, and probably a healthier nature, and certainly Aristophanes' speech in *The Symposium* is a work of comic genius. Schopenhauer was a more agile epigrammatist, despite his streak of pubescent gloom ("Never a rose without a thorn; yet many a thorn without a rose"). Nietzsche was a greater satirist, even if the savagery of his wit confined him to a single comic register. One might, if one is no slave to occidental prejudice, suggest Chuang-Tzu, who was more adept at the droll and the fantastic. But none of these poses any credible challenge to Kierkegaard's supremacy.

There are, of course, philosophers who are unintentionally amusing. I find Kant's *Critique of Practical Reason* nearly as fanciful, silly, and diverting as *Alice in Wonderland*. Almost everything of Daniel Dennett's has the power to reduce me to tears of jollity. Heidegger, at his worst, defies parody. But, in these cases, the temperament of the reader provides the better part of the jest. And certainly it would be cheating to adduce even more entertaining works of "occasional" philosophy, like Poe's *Eureka* or D. H. Lawrence's *Fantasia on the Unconscious*.

There are, it seems to me—after some reflection—only two figures who might credibly displace Kierkegaard from his throne: Voltaire and J. G. Hamann. The former, without question, was a greater and more versatile humorist than Kierkegaard, and in those terms alone there could scarcely be any comparison. The question worth asking, however, is whether Voltaire was in any real sense a philosopher, rather than a mere *philosophe*; and I would say he was not. I tend to take the view expressed by Baudelaire in his *Journaux intimes*: Voltaire was a man with no speculative capacity whatsoever, oblivious to mystery, mentally lethargic, a "pastor to the concierges," who merely refined intellectual philistinism into a kind of "system." So that leaves only Hamann; and here, I really do think, Kierkegaard is not equal to the contest.

Johann Georg Hamann (1730-88) is, by any measure, an obscure figure, little known outside the exclusive circles of a certain very rarefied kind of scholarship, hardly read at all even in his native Germany, and perhaps truly understood by next to no one. And yet it would be difficult to exaggerate not only the immensity of his influence upon all the great European intellectual and cultural movements of his age, but his continued significance for philosophers and theologians. A

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friend (and antagonist) of Kant's, an inspiration to Herder and Jacobi, read and admired by the likes of Goethe, Schelling, Jean Paul, and indeed Kierkegaard, he is the only figure to whom Hegel felt it necessary to devote a long monograph. Today, however, his importance is scarcely a rumor even to the very literate, and the best known book about him in English is a ghastly, feeble, and imbecile squib by one of the twentieth century's most indefatigably fraudulent intellectuals, Isaiah Berlin. The young, gifted scholar John R. Betz, of Loyola College in Baltimore, is due soon to produce what promises to be the definitive appreciation of Hamann in English, which may go some small way towards reviving interest in this miraculous man; but, at present, he remains all but forgotten.

That Hamann suffers so much neglect, one must concede, is largely the result of the willfully hermetic impenetrability of his most important works. His humor is not, it must be said, immediately accessible: his style quite often resembles that of Laurence Sterne or James Joyce, and is full of eccentric, apparently perverse, and somewhat demented textual games; his prose is intentionally obscure, overflowing with classical references, cryptic metaphors, and convoluted pranks. It is not hyperbole to say that Hamann's writings constitute probably the most difficult body of literature within the German language: they are brief, compressed, manic, irrepressibly inventive, at once diffuse and piercing, and almost occult in their impregnability. A typical example of his sense of humor might be this, from his *New Apology for the Letter 'h'* (written as a protest against orthographical reforms introduced under Frederick the Great):

> To be sure, I would ten times rather lose my breath in the wind talking to a blind man about the *first* and *fourth* days of the Mosaic creation story, or to a deaf man about the harmony of a little nightingale or Italian castrato than submit myself any longer to an opponent who is not even capable of seeing that a universal, sound, practical language, reason, and religion without *arbitrary* axioms is his own *oven of ice*.

And that is by no means Hamann at his most opaque. At its most unrestrained, his voice is mercurial, Heracleitean, vatic, even sibylline; and even in his own day he was spoken of as "enigmatical," "dark," the "Magus in the North." He admitted that he could not help but speak "the language of Sophists, of puns, of Cretans and Arabians, of wise men and Moors and Creoles" and "babble a confusion of criticism, mythology, rebuses, and axioms." To Hamann, it was obvious that the Age of Reason—which, to his mind, was an age of deepest darkness—required a prose of almost insoluble opacity. It was to his masterpiece, the *Aesthetica in Nuce*, that Hamann gave the subtitle "A Rhapsody in Kabbalistic Prose," but he might have attached it to almost everything he wrote. And yet he was never a wanton irrationalist; Kierkegaard spoke entirely in earnest when he ranked Hamann and Socrates together as "perhaps two of the most brilliant minds of all time."

Admittedly, it would be all but impossible to assemble an anthology of Hamann's wit and wisdom like the one Oden has created for Kierkegaard. Hamann's humor consists so much in ludicrous involutions of thought and language, and in the cumulative effect of one absurdity heaped atop another, and in the almost sweetly earnest obliviousness of a voice like that of a holy fool that one must almost entirely immerse oneself in his imaginative world in order to enjoy the fruits of his comic genius. One need only attempt to describe the lunatic intricacies of Hamann's prose to realize how impossible it is adequately to convey a sense of its frenzied ingenuity.

For instance, one of Hamann's works composed in French is a sardonically fawning open letter to Frederick the Great (whose superstitious servility to the mythology of Enlightenment reason Hamann particularly detested) called *To the Solomon of Prussia*, a text so savage and unrestrained in its mockery that no one would publish it when it was first written for fear of the state censor. Hamann's last attempt to get it printed was through C. F. Nicolai in Berlin; and when Nicolai failed to respond to his request, Hamann published an exquisitely deranged feuilleton called *Monologue of an Author* under the ridiculous "Chinese" pseudonym Mien-Man-Hoam. This at least prompted Nicolai to send Hamann an official rejection. But this rejection, in turn, prompted Hamann to compose and publish a piece called *To the Witch at Kadmanbor*, a "letter" supposedly written by Nicolai to an old sorceress, asking her to translate Hamann's *Monologue* from the Chinese of the "Mandarin" who wrote it—a letter that, midway through its course, suddenly becomes a delirious monologue of its own (in which the witch now appears as the Fury Alecto, but with two faces, "a calf's eye like Juno's, and the watery eye of an owl") before concluding with the recommendation that Hamann be forced like his illustrious ancestor Haman—from the book of Esther—to mount the scaffold. Now, honestly, there is no way to appreciate such apparently Bedlamite ravings (if one is indeed able to do so at all) except taken in their totality.

Oden, to his credit, briefly mentions Kierkegaard's estimation of Hamann as "the greatest humorist in

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Christianity" (in fact, as Oden neglects to mention, Kierkegaard also called him "the greatest humorist in the world"), but pursues it no further; and this is a pity, because in many ways Hamann provided Kierkegaard with the model for his own authorship; and it is arguable that Kierkegaard's entire career as a Christian thinker and humorist was a somewhat failed attempt to achieve the purity of vision and richness of mirth that were simply natural and unforced elements of Hamann's mind and idiom. It was from Hamann that Kierkegaard learned the power of "indirect communication" and the impossibility of making the passion of faith conform to any recognized standards of "responsible" discourse. It was from Hamann, too, that Kierkegaard acquired his taste for outlandish pseudonyms (though Kierkegaard's were never quite as wild or surreal as some of Hamann's—Vettius Epagathus Regiomonticolae, An Apocryphal Sibyl, Ahasuerus Lazarus, Abelard Viterbius, Aristobulus, An Angry Prophet from the Brook Kerith, and so on). Indeed, Kierkegaard even once remarked that, had he known earlier the tale of Hamann's marriage to the serving-girl and (in Hamann's words) 'hamadryad' Regina Schumacher, he himself might have married Regine Olsen after all.

One could, I suppose, argue that Hamann was not a philosopher in the proper sense; but, if Kierkegaard was a philosopher, so was Hamann, and probably a more important one. In fact, Kierkegaard's own struggle with the legacy of Hegel was, to a great degree, a conscious reprise of Hamann's agon with Kant and his disciples. In either case, the great *moral* labor of the critic was to shelter particularity against the all-consuming abstractions of (transcendental or absolute) idealism, and to raise a protest on behalf of the concrete against the ghostly universalisms of modern rationality. In later years, in attempting to disentangle the significance of his authorship from that of Hamann's, Kierkegaard liked to assert that he had given theoretical depth to insights that, in Hamann, had only the quality of aphoristic lightning bolts; and, increasingly, Kierkegaard came to judge Hamann as too irresponsibly playful, ill-controlled, self-indulgent, and flippant—indeed, perhaps blasphemous. (Some of Hamann's contemporaries agreed, especially after Hamann adorned the title-page of his *Crusades of a Philologian* with the leering visage of a satyr.)

It is true, one must concede, that Hamann eschewed systematic expositions of theory to the end; he never abandoned pseudonymy or indirection, never attempted to bring the passion of faith within the securer enclosure of any sort of psychological science or speculative regimen, and never condescended to the soberer disciplines of "direct communication." Indeed, his opinion of philosophical method as practiced in his day was almost entirely dismissive; when, after his powerful conversion experience in London, Hamann was met by Kant, who had been sent by friends to rescue him from his newfound "enthusiasm," his reaction was one of polite amusement: "I must laugh at the choice of a *philosopher* to bring about my conversion. I view the finest demonstration as a sensible girl views a love letter, and view a Baumgartian explication as a diverting *fleurette*."

Hamann's most devastating assault upon Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* is an intricate and inspissated satire, no more than a handful of pages long, entitled the *Metacritique of the Purism of Reason*, wherein Hamann—in a series of brilliant and parodic strokes—exposes all the ineradicable impurities upon which Kant's "pure reason" depends. And yet, Hamann's critique of Kant, for all that it is written as a kind of burlesque, is far more original and startling—and a far more penetrating assault upon modernity—than is Kierkegaard's critique of Hegel (despite the latter's satiric excellence). The *Metacritique*, when its implications are grasped, retains a power to disturb and provoke that nothing of Kierkegaard's possesses.

This is not to diminish Kierkegaard's accomplishments, but only to recognize Hamann's genius. And it is worth noting that Kierkegaard's theory of comedy—at least as Oden has explicated it—is far easier to reconcile with Hamann's writings than with Kierkegaard's. The special logic of this theory, after all, is that the *Christian* philosopher—having surmounted the "aesthetic," "ethical," and even in a sense "religious" stages of human existence—is uniquely able to enact a return, back to the things of earth, back to finitude, back to the aesthetic; having found the highest rationality of being in God's *kenosis*—His self-outpouring—in the Incarnation, the Christian philosopher is reconciled to the particularity of flesh and form, recognizes all of creation as a purely gratuitous gift of a God of infinite love, and is able to rejoice in the levity of a world created and redeemed purely out of God's "pleasure."

Of no philosopher could this be truer than Hamann. He was a man of the deepest, most fervent and adoring piety, and yet of an almost Nietzschean irreverence ("My unrefined imagination has never been able to conceive a Creative Spirit without *genitalia*"); he was practically a Christian mystic, and yet he delighted in the world of the senses, especially in the joys of sexual love (his repeated and most disdainful accusation against the apostles of Enlightenment was that they were spiritual eunuchs piping their dreary abstractions

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in shrill falsetto voices). This was so (however scandalous it might occasionally seem) because in the Christian evangel he had encountered a God whose creatures are the work of delight, who is pleased to reveal his majesty in total abasement, and who is Himself always "the Poet in the beginning of days." For Hamann, the return to finitude was unreserved and utterly charitable; everything he wrote or did was touched with a spirit of festivity; his humor contained no lingering residue of fatalism, irony, or rancor.

Of Kierkegaard, this is not true. For him, until the end, the return to finitude was a return only to the singular and terrible enigma of the incarnate God in time. There is always a tragic, "dialectical," even Gnostic tension in his thought: the Incarnation remains a "paradox" rather than a delightful "surprise," an invasion of worldly time that time cannot comprehend, and that thus forbids any real reconciliation with the world. For Hamann, by contrast, the kenosis of God illuminates and transfigures everything, grace transfuses all of nature, culture, and cult, and so his humor has a wealth, an overwhelming hilarity, and a truly Christian mirthfulness that Kierkegaard's does not. Where Kierkegaard was most inclined to become severe and saturnine, Hamann was most reckless in his rejoicing. Hamann would have looked, certainly, with a more tender regard upon the absurdity of a "Christian whorehouse"; the idea would probably have moved him more to reflect upon the prodigality of divine love than to indulge in caustic complaint.

This, then, is why I would want to deny Kierkegaard the laurels Oden has so diligently plaited for him: because Kierkegaard fell short, at the last, of his own high vision of the Christian humorist, while Hamann realized it. I might just qualify my judgment by saying that Kierkegaard remains perhaps the greatest human humorist among philosophers, since I suspect that—at least at some spiritual level—Hamann was actually the miscegenate offspring of a satyr and an angel. But, taken without qualifications, the title of "most amusing" philosopher must be accorded to Hamann, and Hamann alone. And, as it happens, I suspect that Kierkegaard (at least in his better moments) would entirely agree. FT

The Old Country

In that darkness there could be no hope—
Not merely light withdrawn but light refused.
The ashen trees had dropped, not lost, their leaves,
That green a smothering burden they abhorred.
The people in that place were all too old,
The children most of all, who wore their youth
As if it were a costume to be shed.
The willow was counted wisest of the trees.
There were no separate clouds. The sky was gray.
Nothing and no one waited for anything,
But all attention leaned back toward the past.
The wind, when it spoke at all, said simply, "Once."

Matthew Boudway

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Books in Review

Rival Immortalities

Human Dignity in the Biotech Century: A Christian Vision for Public Policy.
Edited by Charles W. Colson and Nigel M. De S. Cameron
InterVarsity. 252 pp. $15 paper.

Reviewed by Eric Cohen

In *Human Dignity in the Biotech Century: A Christian Vision for Public Policy*, some of the most active voices in the American bioethics debate reflect on the promise and perils of biotechnology, but especially the perils. This collection surveys a wide range of novel biological experiments: the creation and destruction of human embryos to procure stem cells, the creation of cloned human children, the genetic engineering of offspring, the merging of human beings with machines. These advances, say the authors, all force us to reflect again on what it means to be human—and especially on what it means to have "dominion" over God's creation and to be creatures "made in God's image."

What binds these errant technologies together is human willfulness gone mad. In trying to extend life using stem cells from embryos, we destroy the weakest and most vulnerable human beings. In trying to improve the genetic quality of our children, we abort the disabled as "life unworthy of life." In trying to preserve our conscious minds forever, we reduce human beings to "software" and "hardware" that can be mixed, matched, downloaded, and upgraded. "With the latest advances in biotechnology," writes coeditor Charles Colson, "not only are we taking upon ourselves the god-like prerogative of ending human life as we choose . . . but we are attempting to appropriate the god-like prerogative of making human life as we choose."

While some scientists may see themselves as persecuted Galileos and some religious believers may worry about "man playing God," the bioethics debate is not best seen as a clash between religion and science. Most orthodox Christians are friends of biomedical research; they see biotechnology as a moral enterprise so long as it observes moral limits. And many scientists have made biotechnology a religion, seeing stem-cell research as a form of salvation for those burdened by nature's imperfections, and envisioning biotech advances as the pathway to immortality for Promethean mortals.

But in America, the bioethics debate does often pit conservative Christians against eminent scientists and patient-group advocates, with

Eric Cohen *is editor of the* New Atlantis *and a resident scholar at the Ethics and Public Policy Center.*

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both sides appealing to human love to make their case. Christians assert our solemn duty to love all human beings equally and the grave evil of using some lives as raw materials to help others. Scientists and advocates for patients appeal to our love for those who suffer from terrible diseases, and to the American love of progress itself.

We Americans experience these uncorrected loves as a tension. When it comes to embryo research, we confront the tension between familial love and neighborly love, between our hunger to save those we know best and our obligation to protect those we can barely see. When it comes to the new reproductive technologies, we confront the tension between the love that makes parents hunger for "better children" and the love that welcomes children as they are, however "imperfect." Not surprisingly, we do not always speak of love by name in the public square. We talk about rights and equality and compassion. But it is love, in the deepest sense, that we are really debating.

And real love requires confronting hard truths, which many biotech enthusiasts seem unwilling to do. *Human Dignity in the Biotech Century* offers a powerful indictment of many scientists and policymakers for trying to hide the moral problems raised by embryo research and human cloning, a deception these advocates justify because they believe it serves the compassionate end of advancing medicine. In two useful essays, William Saunders and Wesley Smith describe how scientists in the 1980s invented the term "preembryo" to redescribe the earliest stage of human life, a biological falsehood meant to dehumanize the living embryos they seek to destroy. And when it became feasible to think of harvesting *cloned* human embryos solely for research and destruction, scientists and advocates invented the term "therapeutic cloning," hoping that the public's fears about cloning would be ameliorated by their desire for therapies.

"Therapeutic cloning," of course, is not therapeutic at all; there are no cures and no patients, merely research involving the creation and destruction of human embryos as experimental tools, and the perfection of the techniques necessary to produce cloned babies. When this semantic tactic backfired, advocates began claiming that cloning is not really cloning at all, and that the organism created by cloning is not really an embryo but an "unfertil-

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ized egg." They started using the technical name—"somatic cell nuclear transfer"—to hide the underlying human reality.

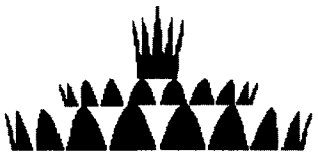
Scientific prestige, Orwellian euphemism, and emotional appeals from celebrities with illnesses have combined to give embryonic stem-cell research national momentum. And yet, as various contributors here note, the greatest harm committed by promoters of such stem-cell research is often to the patients themselves, by promising cures that are not near and may never come. Opponents of embryo destruction cannot deny the genuine medical promise of embryonic stem-cell research; indeed, they must be careful that they do not exaggerate the therapeutic potential of adult stem cells in their effort to offer the public an ethical research alternative. But embryo research advocates have shamelessly presented embryonic stem cells as a cure-all for virtually every human disease and have portrayed the Bush administration's policy of limiting federal funding as the only barrier to miraculous therapies.

For wealthy celebrities who are sick, the promotion of research becomes a reason to live, a cause that gives their hard lives a seemingly noble purpose. But for most people who are gravely ill, disabled, or dying, the great human challenge is learning to accept one's own limitations, and learning to live a meaningful life in spite of them. It does not serve the newly paralyzed teenager to promise, as John Edwards did in the recent presidential campaign, that if Democrats were elected the paralyzed were "going to walk, get up out of that wheelchair and walk again." Perhaps we will find cures for paralysis and Alzheimer's and Parkinson's in the future. But such declarative promises turn compassion into exploitation. They misrepresent scientific facts in the cause of politics.

ONE OF THE CENTRAL themes of the book is the relationship between the bioethics debate and the abortion debate. Clearly, there is significant ethical and political overlap—with both issues concerning the moral standing of developing human life, the meaning of procreation and parenthood, and the cultural divide in America over the meaning of "rights." But as the various authors make clear, the bioethics debate is not simply the abortion fight in a new guise; it raises questions and challenges that are truly novel and that need to be understood on their own terms.

First, as Nathan A. Adams correctly observes in his essay, when it comes to embryo research and human cloning, we are still, so to speak, in a pre–*Roe v. Wade* moment—that is to say, legislators can still govern, both in Congress and in the states. And for conservatives, this is both an opportunity and a problem. It is an opportunity because we can set moral limits on the most dehumanizing forms of research, which a few states have done. It is a problem because the people's representatives in Congress and in most states do not wish to set any limits at all, and often seek to promote what they see as medically and economically promising research. The three-billion-dollar bond initiative to fund embryo research and research cloning in California, passed by voters by a large margin in November 2004, is only the most shameful example. As we debate these issues, therefore, we will squarely confront the condition of the culture, since the argument that the court is imposing indignities on us rather than our choosing indignities for ourselves is now much less relevant.

Second, for the very reason that the culture may be moving gradual-



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ly in a pro-life direction when it comes to abortion, we may never move in that direction when it comes to embryo research. As new imaging technologies offer us graphic evidence of the visible humanity of the growing fetus, our moral sentiments may be powerfully awakened or reawakened. But the early embryo does not look human; it does not, by its appearance alone, awaken our moral sentiments at all. And because the primary goal of embryo research is the noble one of healing the sick, not ending a pregnancy, we might find ourselves embracing embryo research (if it works) even as we increasingly reject abortion. When our closest neighbors are suffering, it will be hard for many of us to see microscopic embryos as our neighbors.

Finally, as several of the essayists point out, biotech is not simply about the rejection of new life but is rather about the tempting possibilities of control of new life. Abortion is fundamentally anti-child; genetic control is "pro-child" in a perverse way. The two attitudes are obviously related, since both make entrance into the world conditional on parental will. But they are also distinct, certainly in their social effect and in the public imagination.

Having said all that, we are not on the brink of designing future Einsteins, Mozarts, or Michael Jordans. Such possibilities are no more scientifically imminent than the possibility of curing every known disease with embryonic stem cells. But what may be closer to reality is the prospect of cloning a child, which would involve mostly infertile couples cloning themselves, or bereaved parents cloning a dead son or daughter. And what we already have is a battery of genetic litmus tests used to determine which embryos and fetuses are worthy of life and which are not. These tests are increasingly going beyond the prenatal diagnosis of fatal diseases (like Tay-Sachs) and present disabilities (like Down's syndrome) to screen for the probability of future disease (like Alzheimer's) and for genetic correlations with certain desirable traits (like height). In other words, we are moving from "weeding out" the sick to "selecting in" those with a chance to be "better than well."

This genetic selection is not the same as genetic design. We are screening nature's creations, not making creations of our own. We are not, in the favored phrase of some advanced thinkers, becoming "post-human"; we are, rather, acting inhumanly. And it is on this ground that opponents of errant biotechnology should make their case.

THE FINAL THEME of the book worth noting is the desire to create a grand new coalition between pro-life Christians and pro-choice leftists in opposition to the Brave New World. This is the focus of coeditor Nigel Cameron's work in bioethics, both in this book and in the various organizations that he heads. It is a noble effort but one that will prove mostly fruitless, for it confuses the American debate with the European one.

In Europe and Canada, there is a secular idea of human dignity and a deeper skepticism about the unequivocal goodness of technological progress. There is a Green left with genuine political power. But the American left is not Green, certainly not when it comes to human biotechnology. And the American left is fundamentally antireligious and antidignity, seeking to oppose whatever the "religious right" is for and to promote whatever the "religious right" is against. This is why embryo research and research cloning have become articles of faith for American liberalism. There are, of course, some impressive and courageous exceptions at tiny leftist think tanks on the secular coasts. But they are exceptions, and they have virtually no political power, certainly not in the Senate, where there is not a single leftist vote in favor of the ban on all human cloning.

The political and cultural reality is that nearly all American opponents of embryo research and research cloning believe in God, even if they do not rely on God's word alone to make their public case for ethical limits. More particularly, they nearly all believe in the Christian God—a God who stands with the weak and vulnerable, who redeems man's sinful nature with His own sacrificial suffering, who affirms life at the cost of death on the cross. This does not mean that one needs to be Christian or even religious to oppose embryo research or research cloning. I oppose both; I am not a Christian. And it is indeed true that in Europe and Canada, many secular people oppose these activities, and many nations far less religious than America have laws against them. But American scientists, who are probably no more secular than their European and Canadian counterparts, are much less willing to accept any limits at all on their research. They see all limits as inherently religious in nature and therefore illegitimate in a liberal democracy.

This is, one might say, the American difference, both for better and for worse. We are anxiously concerned with immortality—whether in this life through science or in the next life by divine love. Europe is not interested in immortality at all. The American contest is largely a struggle to persuade the bourgeois middle that one idea of immortality rather than the other deserves their deepest devotion. And the American middle, as always, will try to have it both ways. In the meantime, biotechnology will proceed apace with few political limits, halted only by the inability of even the greatest scientists to make good on their grandest promises.

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Extended Conversation

ARTISTIC LICENSE: THREE CENTURIES OF GOOD WRITING AND BAD BEHAVIOR
By BROOKE ALLEN
Ivan R. Dee
244 pp. $26.

Reviewed by J. A. Gray

I'll write because I'll give
You, critics, means to live.
For should I not supply
The cause, th' effect would die.

ROBERT HERRICK's quatrain is a reminder which critics do well to bear in mind when they sit down to practice their craft. But to suggest that critics acknowledge their dependence is not to ask them to confess that they are therefore parasites, or worse. George Steiner's declaration, early in his career, that "when he looks back, the critic sees a eunuch's shadow," is far too self-suspicious. (Not to mention infelicitous as a working metaphor: could even the nimblest of naked critics, facing the sun at just the right angle, really achieve such optical confirmation of his neuteredness?)

Brooke Allen is a critic who knows that her craft is a potent one. In a review of a Clive James book in the *New Criterion* (June 2003), she offers her answer to the charge that "those who can't create, criticize," which is this: "A culture amounts to a sort of extended conversation, and conversation demands response and commentary as well as declarative statement." A culture, of course, is much more than a conversation, but it is also a conversation, and those who can speak to us meaningfully about our literature can get us to see things and to hear things that we might have missed or misheard without their help. The critical art is a genuine art, an honorable branch of the teaching arts or guiding arts, and Allen is right that a thriving culture demands that it be done, done freely, and done well.

Allen's *Artistic License: Three Centuries of Good Writing and Bad Behavior* is a collection of essays previously published in leading journals; for the most part they are book reviews, the books being recent biographies of famous writers English and American (Hans Christian Andersen is the only non-anglo-scribe). Such a collection sounds rather old-fashioned, like something in the lives-of-the-poets line, but her writing is neither canned bio nor hasty journalism, and she is so well informed and perspicacious that these pieces surpass their generative occasions and succeed in standing alone as worthwhile essays.

She presents eighteen writers (seventeen men and one woman) in historical order beginning with Samuel Pepys in the 1660s and ending with Simon Raven in the 1970s. Thus the "three centuries" of the subtitle. They are mostly major authors, with a few important minor leaguers included. Thus the "good writing" of the subtitle. But what about the "bad behavior"? Allen's preface begins this way: "The Western tradition, it seems, has been dominated by a sorry collection of alcoholics, compulsive gamblers, manic-depressives, sexual predators, and various unfortunate combinations of two, three, or even all of the above." I instantly began to think of counterexamples, as this pronouncement sounded a little stale and a bit willful; her sample of ten or twelve writers who might be called canonical, stretched over three centuries, is no basis for extrapolations of any kind.

But after this snappy lead Allen does not proceed to some dubious thesis—that creativity and sociopathology are somehow reciprocal, that bad boys make better writers, or even that prose is the curse of the drinking class. Rather, she takes the occasion to state her high regard for what people with literary ambitions have been able to accomplish despite their malfeasances and miseries: "What is surprising is that so many writers have held on to artistic rectitude in the face of all-but-insuperable personal failings." At the end of her

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brief preface, in fact, she pulls the punch of her opening, admitting, "The writers in this book would seem to have little in common. They prove, if such proof again be needed, that there is no such thing as an 'artistic temperament'; there never has been. There are only artists, infinitely variable and fascinating."

In ending her preface with this unguarded assertion, Allen gives a preview of the qualities that she will exhibit as our guide on this literary tour: she is sincere and vulnerable (vulnerable to the spell, to the charm, of the art she undertakes to write about—an essential quality in a critic, by the way); she is disposed to admiration and undisposed to categorization; she is, in a word, humane.

AS FOR THE ACTUAL principle of inclusion at work in this collection, if it is not bad behavior, what is it? Allen says no more about it, but the strong impression as one follows her through the centuries is that her keenest interest is sparked by the sight of upward striving. The sole aristocrat in the group is Byron, and there is no member of the leisured classes here, except perhaps for Henry James. Virtually all of the writers profiled are people of humble birth and ordinary means trying to write their way up, sometimes achieving fame and fortune (with its familiar occupational hazards) sometimes achieving merely a lifelong struggle to pay the bills. The cruxes in such careers, where ambition and responsibility collide, where creativity and constraint interact, provoke Allen's genuine sympathy, and she is eager to discover and to make clear to us where a writer's reach exceeds his grasp, or his grasp his reach, and the myriad ways that a writer's "inner life" (her phrase) intersects with his publishing life.

The behavior that Allen reports is not uniformly bad. Jane Austen was "a model citizen": "While her contemporaries courted the spark of

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divine madness, she was and is perhaps the sanest writer in the language." Nathaniel Hawthorne, William Thackeray, and Bram Stoker endured their share, or more, of misery while evidently inflicting little misery on others. "Kindness" is a characteristic for which Allen expresses the highest respect, and she is pleased to report that Austen, Lord Byron, and Wilkie Collins all possessed it: "Kindness is not an easy quality but a difficult one, closely allied with intelligence, sensibility, and the rarest of all virtues, tolerance."

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But the bad behavior is bad indeed. Pepys was a drinker, wife-beater, and adulterer; Lawrence Sterne drove his wife insane with his ceaseless infidelities; James Boswell was alcoholic, depressive, adulterous, and a puerile toady; Richard Sheridan was an adulterer, drunkard, and woman-abuser; Byron "mixed hatred with lust and behaved in a sadistic fashion" as he preyed upon both sexes, though Allen informs us, in extenuation, that today he would be diagnosed with bi-polar disorder ("hypersexuality . . . is one of the more common symptoms of manic-depression"). In America, Sinclair Lewis was alcoholic, egotistical, and "an atheist with no political illusions"—though for his championing of "the wavering, imperfect liberal spirit," Allen says, we should be grateful—and William Saroyan was "a monster of narcissism" whose self-devouring ego allowed him to give us no lasting work.

"Aren't we all despicable creatures?" Allen asks companionably. Well, yes. "Isn't it the artist's duty to portray the human being—the *whole* human being, including the despicable elements?" Yes again. And the implicit corollary, which Allen in her readings demonstrates well, is that it is the reader's duty to engage with the whole humanness of each writer, because literary art is never reducible either to a fungible commodity or to a politically serviceable construct, but is, when it is genuine, a mysteriously unmanageable manifestation of human personhood. Allen, of course, is not dogmatic about the efficacy of these close encounters of the literary kind and does not work by reduction but rather approaches her subject with respectful suggestiveness. "Writers' lives are not always particularly interesting," says Allen. "Knowledge of them does not necessarily add to one's enjoyment of the work. In some cases, though, such knowledge does enrich our understanding."

A few cases in point: James

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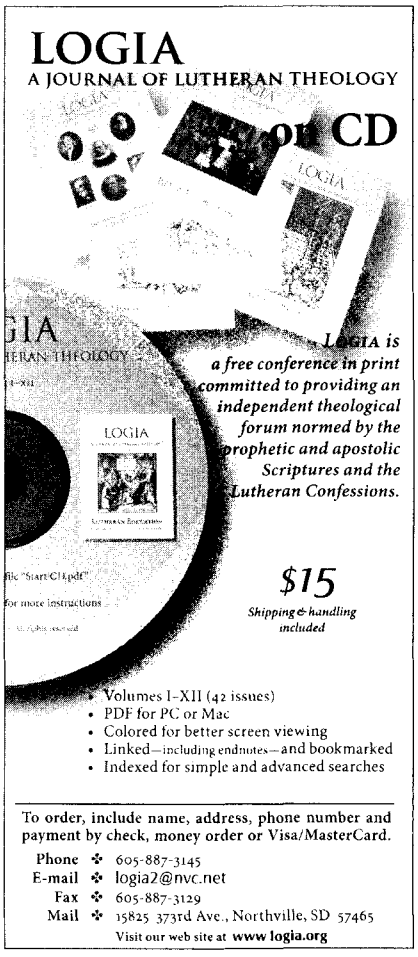
Boswell's great *Life of Johnson*, she says, had effects that the author never intended and could not have foreseen: By writing his "paean to . . . Johnson, whom he genuinely worshipped, Boswell finally slammed the door on Johnson's dying tradition." He "effectively killed off the ideal of high decorum in art, and in doing so helped pave the way for new definitions of art and its function. . . ." As for Nathaniel Hawthorne, Allen cannot warm up to his "twilit soul": "The artist who created strong, passionate, brilliant heroines . . . refused to educate his own intelligent daughters. The moralist who was so deeply preoccupied with the sins of the past was content to condone the preeminent sin of his own day, slavery. . . ." He was "essentially a negative, elusive character." The unfortunate William Makepeace Thackeray, whom Allen admires tremendously, lived a life of "unremitting labor" as "a uxorious family man forever denied marriage or acknowledged love," and in his fiction he is unable to allow his characters happy endings beyond the "cold comfort of self-knowledge." She finds Simon Raven, author of the ten-volume roman fleuve *Alms for Oblivion*, to be incapable of "real emotion or strength" in his writing because in his life he had an immunity to love: "The lack of love harms his writing: all his books share a tiresome coarseness and a tendency to sentiment."

CERTAINLY MY understanding of several of these writers has been enriched by Allen's labors, and I would guess that readers whose understandings need no enrichment could also enjoy her efforts. If there is a weakness in the collection, it is only a generic weakness, in that literary essays about Books That Are Known To Matter can be just ever so slightly slack. Allen's very skillfulness in this form conduces to lend the proceedings an air of privileged relaxation; we often seem to be settled comfortably in a quiet corner of the members' reading room. The blood and tears (and other bodily fluids) spent in the tangled lives of the people who made these familiar works are acknowledged feelingly, and yet there is no particular urgency to the reconsiderations undertaken here. The blood, the tears, and the rest have long ago been stanched, dried, and remingled with the dust; the arrivistes have long since arrived.

Which is only to say that this collection lacks some of the energy of Allen's first collection, *Twentieth-Century Attitudes* (2003), in which she contributed to discussions that have more currency. To debates on the worth of writers such as Rohinton Mistry, John Barth, Grace Paley, Saul Bellow, Iris Murdoch, James Baldwin, and others, her contributions, valuing common sense and direct experience over academic theory or aesthetic partisanship, are consistently engaging. In *Artistic License*, I found Allen to be at her sharpest and most enjoyable in treating the lesser-known and lower-grade writers, such as Bram Stoker (author of *Dracula*), L. Frank Baum (creator of *The Wizard of Oz*), and G. A. Henty (Victorian author of "boys' novels"). These pieces seemed to bring out her best. Some of Henty's dozens of titles, full of "imperial verve and muscular Christianity," have been reissued for use by home-schooling families, Allen reports, and she takes the occasion to write an appreciative essay on him that includes cautions about his limited virtues and contains her advice, as a mother, about "infinitely better books" for children than his. Also of unexpected interest is her essay on Baum, a morally wholesome, financially clueless, domestically contented, and politically liberal fellow who "succeeded in writing simply while never sacrificing emotional sophistication or his natural respect for every child's moral capacities." Allen suggests that those who are concerned to teach children such important lessons as "the value of diversity" might make good use of Baum's stories, which "almost always involve a group of highly diverse but equal individuals, each of whom contributes something to the resolution of the plot."

The capacity for admiration is rare; to find it combined with a talent for discernment and an ear for good writing is rarer still. As Allen remarks in that *New Criterion* piece on Clive James: "What he writes of Randall Jarrell is true also of himself, at his best: 'We never feel, when reading him, that he is at his most concentrated when he is being most destructive. It is in the effort to draw our attention to merit that he achieves real intensity, and there are few critics of whom that can be said.'" Allen is also among the few.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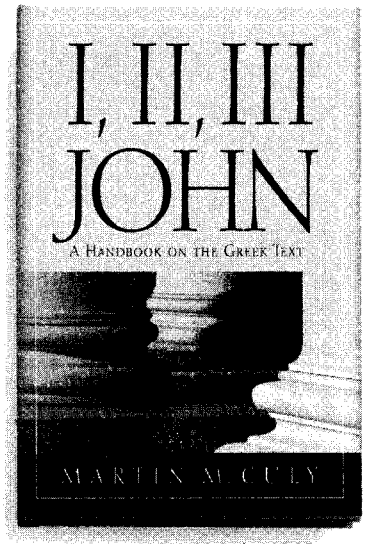
Reviewed by Edward Short

APROPOS BIOGRAPHY, Samuel Johnson once said that "the business of the biographer is to pass lightly over those performances and incidents, which produce vulgar greatness" in order "to lead the thoughts into domestic privacies, and display the minute details of daily life, where exterior appendages are cast aside and men excel each other only by prudence and by virtue." In *Alec Guinness: The Authorized Biography,* Piers Paul Read does not neglect the performances that won his subject "vulgar greatness." Read's observations on Guinness' acting career are incisive and shrewd. But he puts them into perspective and shows how Guinness' moral development—played out in the "minute details of daily life"—constituted his true career.

Read fully appreciates the centrality that Catholicism came to have for Guinness. Two years before he converted at the age of forty-two, Guinness confided to his diary: "My soul, my body, my brain longs for religion. The world is too bleak and blank without a sense of worship." Even in his twenties, while an officer in the Royal Navy, he recognized Catholicism as "the crack regiment," though at the time he felt he could not afford its "expensive uniforms." When his son Matthew fell ill with polio in 1952, Guinness made a pact with God that if Matthew recovered, he would convert. Matthew recovered and Guinness converted. Or so he recalled in his autobiography, *Blessings in Disguise* (1985). Read shows that his conversion was much more gradual, taking root slowly but tenaciously in a nature avid for the life of faith.

GUINNESS' CHILDHOOD was rackety. Born in London in 1914 and educated at private schools, he never knew his father and grew up in lodgings with a mother who was as improvident as she was unpresentable. "My mother was a whore," Guinness told John Le Carré. "She slept with the

EDWARD SHORT *is an independent writer at work on a book about John Henry Newman and his contemporaries.*



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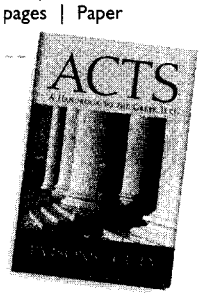

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entire crew on Lord Moyne's yacht at the Cowes Regatta and when she gave birth she called the bastard Guinness but my father was probably the bloody cook." She drank. She stole things. She also turned her son into something of a sybaritic precisian. The delight Guinness took in Savile Row suits, shopping at Asprey's, and hosting Lucullian dinners at the Connaught Hotel, as well as his legendary punctiliousness, can all be traced back to his determination to distance himself from his incorrigible mother.

If Guinness was fond of having things just so, he also enjoyed the louche society of homosexuals. He had homosexual leanings himself, though he appears to have resisted them. One of his best friends, Peter Glenville, the director, was homosexual and Catholic. On the topic of homosexuality, Read is refreshingly sensible. He admits to a certain bafflement as to how Glenville could reconcile a life-long homosexual liaison with the Church's teaching on the sinfulness of sexual relations outside a marriage between a man and a woman. But he acknowledges that the very fact that Glenville saw the sacrament of confession as "necessary for his salvation suggests faith in Christ and acceptance of, if not obedience to, the disciplines of the Church." Guinness felt that such passions "could be controlled, if not cured, by prayer, repentance and the Grace of God."

Once Guinness left school he worked as an advertising copywriter for a year before training for the stage under Martita Hunt, a friend of John Gielgud's, who had "the voice and demeanor of a dowager duchess." At their first lesson, after asking Guinness to mix her a Martini, she told him that an actor should emphasize the verb and leave the nouns and adjectives to look after themselves. (Robert Graves gave the same advice to young poets.) It was a lesson Guinness never forgot. When Gielgud took pity on the pitiably thin young actor and gave him the role of Osric in his 1934 production of *Hamlet*, his acting career was launched. Sixty years later, when Gielgud turned ninety, Guinness handsomely honored his first employer by giving him a lavish luncheon at the Connaught.

During the Second World War, Guinness embraced Anglo-Catholicism "flittingly," as he says, before wearying of what Lytton Strachey called "the tight-rope of High Anglicanism." For Guinness, it was "a psychological bulwark against the uncertainties of war and fear of the future and it stood me in good stead." Indeed, after marrying, he even toyed with the idea of becoming an Anglican priest. But gradually he came to believe that by remaining in the Church of England, he was "quite definitely in enemy territory."

SEVERAL FACTORS went into Guinness' conversion. An unusually intelligent man, he reveled in the intellectual richness of the Catholic tradition. After converting, he wrote to his wife, "One of the recent things I've discovered is that now there is *always* something to think about. Never a dull moment in heaven or hell." Then, too, he needed his faith to be therapeutic. Catholic devotion healed the wounds of illegitimacy. "My prayers are always full of my requirements and not true prayers at all," he once said. And yet he could also write: "I accept absolutely now and with no effort that I am in the actual presence of God on the altar." About the villainies of Rome, he was broadminded: "If you are to come in to the Church . . . it'll be useless your trying to resist—all the horrors that have been and are perpetrated in Christ's name will be so skillfully outweighed by God." Edward Hermann, the American television actor, claimed that the English Catholic Church appealed to his friend because it was posh. But it was no more posh in the 1950s than it is today. What attracted Guinness to the Catholic faith was its truth, not its trappings.

After converting, Guinness regularly renewed his faith with spiritual reading, devouring the works of Newman, Chesterton, Belloc, Knox, Charles de Foucauld, and St. Teresa of Avila. In the first volume of his journals, *My Name Escapes Me* (1997), he quotes a passage from Julian of Norwich's *Revelations of Divine Love*, where Julian speaks of a vision she had in which she saw:

> A little thing, the quantity of a hazelnut, in the palm of my hand, and it was as round as a ball. I thought, "What may this be?" And it was answered me, "It is all that is made." I marveled how it might last and not fall to

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> nothing for littleness. I was answered, "It lasts, and ever shall last, for God loves it."

Guinness was so enamored of this image that he kept a hazelnut in his makeup box: "[I]t was the first thing to be laid out on my dressing-table when I came into the theatre." When the brewery heiress Honor Guinness rejoined the Church, she gave the actor a hazelnut of rare gold to mark the occasion, which prompted him to observe that "something had come full circle, as I have often found in life, giving the lie to my earlier concept of accident, meaninglessness, and chaos." The fact that Honor was convinced that Guinness had been sired by one of her more rambunctious uncles must also have given the bauble special appeal.

Another favorite author was St. Francis de Sales. For Guinness, who could say the most wounding things, it must have been bracing to open *The Devout Life* and read: "Derision or mockery always involves contempt and so is gravely sinful, so that theologians rightly hold mockery to be the worst sin of the tongue we can commit against our neighbor." De Sales' methods for identifying and resisting sin led Guinness to call him "the most comfortable of saints." As he told a friend, "I have returned to his friendly wisdom and greatness with more understanding and a better resolution, I hope, to

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follow his methods. . . . I come and go in fits and starts—so to speak—in my religious life, but it deepens I believe and pray and trust." No one struggling to live the devout life will fail to recognize that prayer.

But Read shows that Guinness' Catholic faith was not simply the faith of a reader of apologetics. Grace touched him directly, personally. "I think most . . . human beings have that once in their lives . . . in greatly varying degrees of course," he wrote his wife. "And *of course* it is . . . God giving each man and woman, according to their capacity, a glimpse of His promise to them, an impression of what eternity could mean, a glimpse of their *adoption* as Sons of God, and by its *withdrawal* a realization of what the Fall of man means. We are all left with a feeling of exhilaration, and yet at the same time, hand in hand with its happiness, a sadness that we are unlikely to encounter it again in this life. It's a golden carrot held up to donkeys—who could be gods. . . ."

IN HIS AUTOBIOGRAPHY, Guinness says that whenever people found out that he was Catholic they would congratulate him on his good fortune, "as if my Premium Bonds paid in a handsome dividend." He was grateful for the dividends but also acknowledged "the constant failures," which were "painful, when not just laughable, and boringly repetitive." Failure, come to think of it, was also the theme of most of his films—the failure of soldiers and spies, bank clerks and salesmen, Cambridge scientists and hapless peers. In his spiritual life, it was his recognition of the failure of natural virtue and the abiding need for sacramental grace that strengthened his faith.

As dutiful as Read is about retailing Guinness' personal characteristics—his hypochondria, his delight in his Hampshire home, his tart tongue and refusal to suffer fools gladly—there was an essential inscrutability about the man. Ronald Neame, who directed him in *The Card* (1952), *The Horse's Mouth* (1958), and *Tunes of Glory* (1960) told the *Independent* after his death: "The diffident, the introvert side of him is something that's been slightly questioned. Was he doing a Greta Garbo, telling the world he wanted to be alone but wanting to be a star? No. Alec was self-effacing, and that was genuine. But he was an extremely difficult person to know. There is a kind of loneliness in his performances, which is him in life. I very much doubt even if his wife really knew him. I got fairly close to him, but I didn't really know him. Nobody did." His wife, Merula, would have disputed that. As she jotted down in a memorandum before her death: "With all the contradictions of his makeup, there was always the rod of truth up the middle which was what I recognized when we first fell in love. I knew I could always trust him."

Merula comes out admirably in the book. Guinness constantly found fault with her, belittling her children's books, her artwork, her cookery. Yet Merula saw her husband's flaws as the result of his compulsive fussiness and forgave him. Read praises her forbearance: "To a number of the Guinnesses' closest friends, while Alec remained his old difficult self, it was Merula who gained in wisdom and goodness..., achieving the genius of sanctity that had eluded Alec."

In "the minute details of daily life, where . . . men excel each other only by prudence and by virtue," Guinness did not altogether shine. Yet, to be fair, if at times he was insufferable, he was a loyal friend and a faithful husband. He was grandly munificent. He recognized his faults and sought to combat them. In summing up his character, Read compares him to Evelyn Waugh, who once said "I know I am awful. But how much more awful I should be without the Faith." Guinness could have said the same. As could many readers of this brilliant book.

Fleeting Light

VOLTAIRE IN EXILE
By IAN DAVIDSON
Grove
326 pp. $24.

Reviewed by Algis Valiunas

IF A PERSON OF FAITH troubles to think of Voltaire (1694–1778) at all these days, it is most likely as the village atheist: shoveling scorn in *Candide* on Leibniz's sunny theodicy that proclaims this the best of all possible worlds, flinging verbal abuse and perhaps the occasional dead cat at passing clerics, making sport of biblical literalists and indeed of believers in

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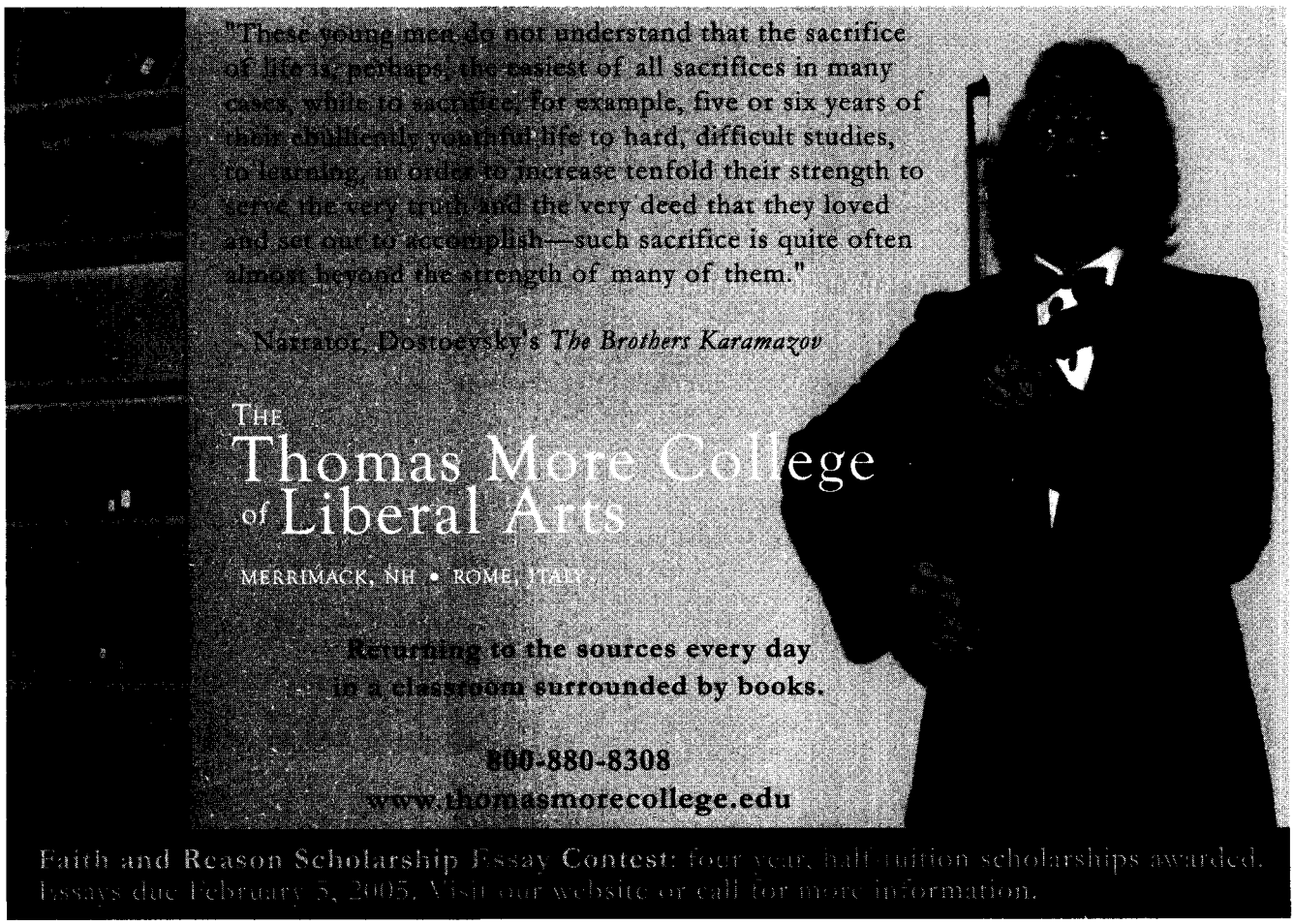
any religion of the revealed word. To many English-speaking readers, the definitive gibe at Voltaire comes from William Blake, who consigns the reasoning wizards of the Enlightenment to everlasting darkness: "Mock on, Mock on, Voltaire, Rousseau: / Mock on, Mock on, 'tis all in vain! / You throw the sand against the wind, / And the wind blows it back again."

The wind bloweth where it listeth, of course, and Blake defends the sacred *pneuma* that Scripture embodies against the assaults of rationalists ancient and modern: "The Atoms of Democritus / And Newton's Particles of light / Are sands upon the Red Sea shore, / Where Israel's tents do shine so bright." Now Blake was no orthodox subscriber to any known faith, yet the choice he presents could not be clearer: take biblical teaching seriously or blight your soul. Voltaire's soul, in Blake's estimation, is simply rotted through, corrupted by a mind too proud to heed the Divine Word.

IAN DAVIDSON, longtime foreign affairs columnist for the *Financial Times*, never mentions Blake but nevertheless is out to demolish this view in his *Voltaire in Exile*: "Everyone knows that Voltaire was famous, but not everyone has a clear idea of what he was famous for, and many of the most commonly held ideas about him—for example, that Voltaire was a cynic and an atheist—are simply wrong." Davidson shows that Voltaire's fame rested not just on his literary accomplishments, which were remarkable, but on his efforts to defend those suffering savage injustice; far from being a cynic, Voltaire was a man of compassionate and generous heart, at least in later life, and far from being an atheist, he professed an ardent natural piety.

Davidson's biography covers the final twenty-five years of Voltaire's life—the years of banishment from the centers of civilization where he had spent much of his previous life. The French poet, playwright, novelist, historian, and philosopher had become the prize acquisition of Prussia's Frederick the Great in 1750, but by 1753 Voltaire's defiant quarrelsomeness had moved Frederick to dismiss him from his court. When Voltaire attempted to return to Paris, however, he was informed that he was no longer welcome there: Louis XV never specified the reason for his royal displeasure, but it seemed clear that Voltaire's interlude with Frederick, no friend to


"These young men do not understand that the sacrifice of life is, perhaps, the easiest of all sacrifices in many cases, while to sacrifice, for example, five or six years of their exuberantly youthful life to hard, difficult studies, to learning, in order to increase tenfold their strength to serve the very truth and the very deed that they loved and set out to accomplish—such sacrifice is quite often almost beyond the strength of many of them."
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France, had made Voltaire Louis' enemy as well.

Voltaire, a very wealthy man by dint of his shrewd investments and entrepreneurial energy, settled in the Swiss city of Geneva, a Calvinist stronghold, and for years would divide his time among the three grand houses he purchased in the region. Davidson's book is principally his admiring account of Voltaire's moral warfare against kingly and religious authority both Parisian and Genevan. *Écrasez l'infâme* was Voltaire's celebrated battle-cry, and he shouted it relentlessly as he fought the "infamous" forces of privileged, persecuting orthodoxy that he believed were out to thwart the rightful intellectual, moral, and material aspirations of mankind.

The Catholic Church—indeed, Christianity at large; indeed, any religion but his own rationalistic deism—was the foremost enemy. For Voltaire's god revealed himself more fully in Newton's laws than in the prescriptions of the Church Fathers. The Nicene Creed, the profession of Catholic faith, was a particular object of Voltairean contempt—for him the Trinity was virtual polytheism—and this marked Voltaire as a particular object of churchly disapprobation and, in the eyes of devout Catholics, as an unbeliever. In the entry "Credo" in his *Philosophical Dictionary* (1764), Voltaire professes his own faith, which he considers genuinely catholic as in his view the Catholic Church is not: Voltaire believes in and loves the one god (emphatically in the lower case, to distinguish him from the baneful official version); all people are equally god's children, and god prefers a virtuous heathen to a Christian clergyman swollen with vanity and wind; moral duty demands that each man acknowledge every other as his brother; the persecutor and the disputatious theologian, who provides the persecutor with his theoretical foundation, are moral abominations; the clergy should be well-paid but not given vast wealth or princely rank; parish priests should be married and have children; monks should be driven from the land.

THIS CREDO OF Voltaire's demonstrates both the glories and the deficiencies of his relation to the divine. His is a philosopher's god, and one should probably be cautiously grateful when a philosopher acknowledges his god, lower-case divinity though it may be, with evident sincerity. This god, Voltaire claims, is the god of all, and he inspires love and

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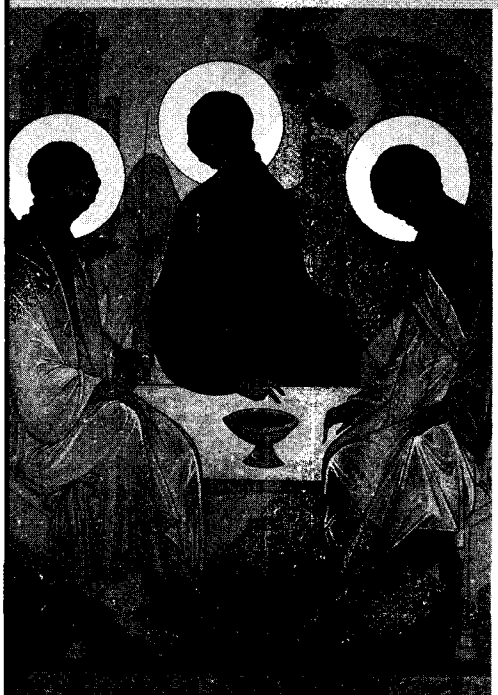

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laudable moral striving in worshipful men. Yet it is evident to us that this god of standard deist issue does not inspire love and moral striving in all men, as one might expect him to; and to say, as Voltaire does, that only wicked or deluded men fail to worship god and honor his moral imperatives fails to account for virtuous atheists and vicious deists—prominent examples of the latter being Rousseau, who farmed out his five children for adoption and whom Voltaire came to hate quite publicly for that reason and several others, and Thomas Jefferson, who kept a slave as his adulterous mistress for years and never freed her, but who piously cited Voltaire on the malevolence of European society, where a man must be either hammer or anvil. The god of reason, despite the obviousness of his moral law, was no more successful than the god of so-called superstition in keeping his supposed faithful to the straight and narrow.

Voltaire prefers to attribute most human viciousness to disputes over religious doctrine, perfectly ludicrous in his eyes, and to the abuse of clerical privilege. For all Voltaire's encomia to natural piety, his bread and butter remains his cultivated impiety, sometimes smirking, sometimes acid, toward every form of religion but his own, which he holds to be uniquely reasonable and right. Voltaire's criticism of religion includes large doses of poisonous loathing for Jews and Judaism as well as much cranky railing against insidious priestcraft. At times it is the rant of a real village atheist. Yet a good deal of his criticism in fact excoriates genuine moral catastrophe brought on by gross hypocrisy on the part of the purportedly holy and by doctrinaire hardness amounting to insanity.

Voltaire's indignation fires Davidson's own, rightly so, and Voltaire's passionate crusading for those broken, sometimes literally broken, by the united and misguided powers of the Catholic Church and the French monarchy inspires Davidson's admiration; indeed, one gathers that this admiration was the motive force behind the biography. Davidson presents his hero as the prototypical human rights advocate, though he freely grants that this term is an anachronism. "Over a period of twenty years, almost until his death, [Voltaire] embarked on a series of one-man campaigns to combat or reverse flagrant and scandalous miscarriages of justice which were inflicted on complete strangers."

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Voltaire intervened to do right, using his great wealth to hire the best lawyers and his incomparable address book to correspond with persons of rare influence. His efforts succeeded only once in preventing an unjust execution, but he did manage to win posthumous rehabilitation for other victims. Davidson hails Voltaire's contributions to both the theory and practice of justice as "landmarks in the history of penal reform in France and Europe."

DAVIDSON TREATS all these cases in detail, but it was one in particular, the Calas affair, that made Voltaire's reputation as an activist; and it illustrates just what he was up against. In 1761 the Protestant merchant Jean Calas of Toulouse, his wife, and one of his sons were accused of murdering another son, though evidence strongly indicated the young man had killed himself. The motive for the alleged murder was that the son had intended to convert to Catholicism—a claim never substantiated, though all the Catholics in Toulouse appeared to believe it. French Protestants were a despised and spiritually brutalized minority: in 1724 Louis XV had forbidden Protestant religious services, upon penalty of life imprisonment or galley slavery for laymen, death for ministers; only Catholic marriages were valid, and all newborn children had to be baptized and raised Catholic; numerous professions, including the law, were restricted to practicing Catholics.

Despite this repression, which did bring about conversions and considerable outward conformity, many Protestants continued to practice their faith in secret. The Calas case brought this abscess of pious hatred to a foul head. To obtain a confession, Jean Calas was tortured on the rack, then forced to drink twenty jugs of water; no confession was forthcoming. The authorities, nonplussed by this silence, released the wife and reduced the accused son's sentence to banishment. The capital sentence for Jean Calas was carried out: his arms and legs were broken on the wheel, and after priestly efforts to wheedle a confession out of him proved unavailing, he was strangled and his body burned.

Upon first hearing of the case, Voltaire mocked the convicted murderer as a violent zealot, but then he became convinced Jean Calas had been wronged. Voltaire extracted the facts of the trial from a secretive and unwilling court, lobbied his eminent friends, and rallied the populace to create a public outcry. Voltaire's ninety-page pamphlet *Treatise on Tolerance* condemned Jean Calas' execution as legal murder, assailed religious intolerance (Voltaire said it was unique to Christianity, a ludicrous charge that Davidson lets go unchallenged), called for greater French tolerance toward Protestants on the model of English tolerance toward Catholics, and declared that all civilizations ultimately worship the same god—a claim that logically implies Christianity is not the one true faith, as Davidson points out. Voltaire's effort to spread tolerance enjoyed both short- and long-term successes. The Calas verdict was quashed, Calas was posthumously exonerated, and Louis XV paid generous compensation to the surviving family.

TO AN OLD FRIEND Voltaire wrote that "it was philosophy alone which carried off this victory." Today of course the victory of Enlightenment philosophy is effectively official in the West, and tolerance and compassion are the supreme virtues; indeed, they are fast becoming the only approved virtues, and the remaining adherents of the other virtues now eroded are finding their own tolerance stretched to breaking. So the touted benefits of the Voltairean project are increasingly dubious, as multitudes liberated from superstition worship not the one true god of luminous philosophy but rather themselves or nothing at all; in the name of tolerance, reason itself totters, and as a result the very idea of rational morality is riven from top to bottom.

Voltaire failed to foresee the bitter consequences of his sweetest dreams, and that is a terrible failure for a philosopher. And yet one cannot deny the intellectual and moral beauty of Voltaire's too hopeful undertaking. His time and place was desperately in need of tolerance and compassion; Voltaire not only provided their theoretical foundation but also embodied their force in just action. The reader of Davidson's excellent biography will come away convinced that there was much that was fine and tender and noble in the soul of this *écraseur de l'infâme* who doubted whether he had a soul but who was sure that, if he did, no one but he had oversight of it.

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By Sam Harris.
W. W. Norton. 256 pp. $24.95.

Sam Harris, who took his undergraduate degree in philosophy at Stanford University, endeavors here to accomplish in brief compass the following goals: to discredit all forms of religious faith as irrational threats to human survival; to put forward a "rational" approach to ethics that avoids relativism and intolerance; and to substitute an empirically based pursuit of "spirituality" for the attachment to religious dogma that seems to afflict so many people who live without the benefit of a Stanford education. Because religious beliefs are "simply beyond the scope of rational discourse," they are deemed life-threatening. His easiest target is radical Islam, and Harris, via biblical proof-texting, readily transfers that faith's embrace of militant jihad (expressed clearly in the writings of the Hadith) to the Jewish and Christian traditions also. As to good things that seem to be linked to religious traditions, Harris is content to declare that they can be secured elsewhere, and notes that religion's historical accomplishments count for nothing since almost everyone, in the past, was religious. No corresponding ex-emption from blame, however, excuses religion from responsibility for witch-burnings, the Inquisition, or even a Holocaust sponsored by a secular regime that declared its philosophical contempt for Christianity. Nor does Harris spend any time pondering, for instance, the infanticidal teachings of prominent philosophers and ethicists (such as Princeton's Peter Singer) who share Harris' "rational" utilitarian perspective. Not surprisingly, the conclusions to which "reason" leads Harris correspond largely with the passions that permeate many American campuses: legalizing marijuana, affirming homosexuality, and believing in Noam Chomsky. This remarkable coincidence might suggest to impartial, rational observers the presence of an unexamined secular faith at the base of Harris' analysis. This short book purporting to tackle profound philosophical issues turns out to be more of a partisan pamphlet on political issues. The good news is that Harris is now working on a doctorate in neuroscience.

—Richard Kirk

The Island at the Center of the World: The Epic Story of Dutch Manhattan, the Forgotten Colony that Shaped America.
By Russell Shorto.
Doubleday. 325 pp. $39.95.

Shorto provides an exciting telling of the founding of the "middle colonies" by the Dutch West India Company, incorporating recently translated seventeenth-century Dutch archives housed in the New York state library in Albany, and asserting that the inhabitants of the original New Amsterdam "shaped America" in important ways. At the center of Dutch New World commerce was the island of Manhattan (New Amsterdam) where lucrative business was done and to which Dutch religious tolerance attracted varied immigrant groups looking for a better life. This situation lent itself, according to Shorto, to a multiculturalism that made New York City the prototypical American "melting pot." A second Dutch contribution to America is representative government, says Shorto, who finds the political struggle for the soul of America epitomized in the conflict between the governor of New Amsterdam, Peter Stuyvesant, a strict Calvinist with a medieval, hierarchal view of authority as descending from God, and Adrian Van der Donck, a lawyer schooled at the then avant-garde University of Leiden, where Hugo Grotius was teaching legal theories supportive of the emerging modern nation-state. Van der Donck held that government should be based not on the Bible but rather on natural law that was discoverable by human reason. Shorto contends that it was these ideas that led Van der Donck to demand from the States General at The Hague some form of representative government and freedom of conscience for the inhabitants of New Amsterdam. Although Van der Donck's efforts did not bear fruit immediately (due to the Second Anglo-Dutch War, which ended in 1664 with the Dutch ceding Manhattan to the British), these principles were included in the first charter of the modern city, drawn up in 1686. Portraying Manhattan as the cultural, economic, and political womb of what was to become America, Shorto begins what could be the first serious revision of our understanding of when and where our ideas of freedom of conscience, individualism, and political rights originated. His book deserves serious consideration.

—Michael P. Orsi

The Church Confronts Modernity: Catholic Intellectuals and the Progressive Era.
By Thomas E. Woods, Jr.
Columbia University Press. 226 pp. $29.50.

Woods argues that the Catholic Church in America, in its confrontation with Progressive ideas, neither fully embraced nor completely rejected theological modernism, which Pope Pius X condemned in 1907 as the "synthesis of all heresies." Instead, Catholic leaders accepted

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what they found useful and left the rest, maintaining, however, a rigorous insistence on the superiority of Catholic teaching. Thus, says Woods, Catholics could test new ideas and enter the public discussion without adopting the secular bases for such discussion. Woods focuses on four areas in the years from 1900 to about 1925: pragmatism, sociology, education, and economics. Pragmatism, that odd assemblage of rationalism, technocratic solutions, and a romanticized ideal of democracy, aroused the most Catholic ire; prescinding from discussing ultimate truths or the ends of human conduct, pragmatism offered no connection with the Catholic understanding of the nature of political society. In education, Catholic intellectuals could not reconcile their faith with the value-free learning that pragmatism required, whereas, in economics, Catholics often made common cause with their secular opponents in the name of reform. Ultimately, however, the Progressives' disdain for natural law arguments and their preference for state control and technocratic solutions conflicted with Catholic teaching. All this is a valuable reminder of a Catholic culture that was unafraid to be confrontational. Woods goes on to argue that Catholic culture has been damaged in the post-Vatican II age by the "apparent retreat in the post-conciliar milieu from the kinds of exclusive claims that for so long had seemed to form the essential backbone of Catholic teaching." Pope John Paul II's "reputation for conservatism" may be overstated, because his "disciplinary regime has in fact been relatively lax," and the Progressive-era Catholic habit of relying on the stability and authority of Rome has become a liability as the center has weakened. This argument is less than convincing. If Catholics in the Progressive era found Rome the touchstone, so do millions today. While one may find the confident Catholic prelates of the era inspiring, especially in comparison to some of the current episcopate, contemporary lay movements (as well as a few prelates) are vigorously presenting the faith to the modern world. As for pronouncements from Rome meant to gather the faithful, one can look in areas other than the "disciplinary regime" for signs of papal strength; see *Evangelium Vitae*. Woods largely ignores the cultural significance of the changes in theological tone he sees, preferring an easier correlation between absolutism and orthodoxy, which limits the book's appeal.

—Gerald J. Russello

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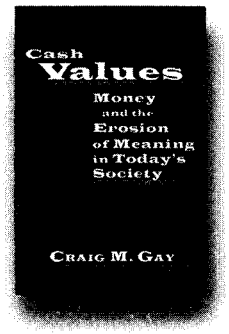

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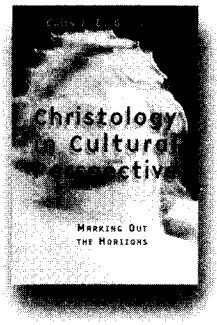

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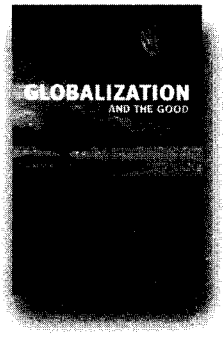

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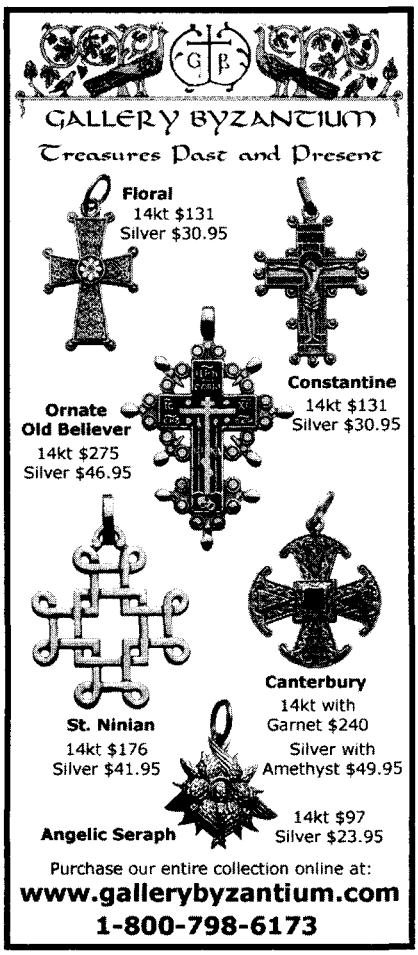
FREEING GOD'S CHILDREN: THE UNLIKELY ALLIANCE FOR GLOBAL HUMAN RIGHTS.
By ALLEN D. HERTZKE.
Rowman & Littlefield.
349 pp. $27.95.

An unlikely alliance indeed. Christians—evangelical, pentecostal, Roman Catholic, mainline, politically left and right—and Jews are today the most important network of human rights activists in the world. They have been the major influence in putting human rights near the center of U.S. foreign policy and, at least occasionally, into the headlines. Hertzke brilliantly traces the emergence of this network, including a sympathetic treatment of the lonely voices who during the Cold War were often shunned for advocating on behalf of those persecuted behind the "Iron Curtain." As A. M. Rosenthal, formerly of the *New York Times*, points out, the persecution of Christians around the world was and still is, in the view of media and cultural elites in this country, not "politically interesting." Rosenthal is among the many heroes and heroines recognized by Hertzke for their courage and persistence, often at a great personal price, in demanding that attention be paid to hundreds of thousands of people whom most of the world would rather forget. This is an informative, candid, and, for all the blood and sorrow, finally an inspiring book. Warmly recommended.



DISRUPTING TIME: SERMONS, PRAYERS, AND SUNDRIES.
By STANLEY HAUERWAS.
Cascade. 252 pp. $26.

CROSS-SHATTERED CHRIST: MEDITATIONS ON THE SEVEN LAST WORDS.
By STANLEY HAUERWAS.
Brazos. 96 pp. $14.99.

Disrupting Time is an *omnium gatherum* on familiar Hauerwasian themes, ranging in style from the incisive to the outrageous to the whimsical. It will be a feast for Hauerwas fans, of whom there are many, and a very uneven introduction to his thought for the uninitiated. *Cross-Shattered Christ* is a very different genre for Hauerwas. Here, as he explains, Hauerwas is displaying more of the theologian and believer that he is as he invites readers to explore with him, and with much guidance from Hans Urs von Balthasar, the central mysteries of the faith. The title is from John Deane's poem "Mercy," by which, it is evident throughout, Hauerwas has been graced in myriad ways. Although the author is a Methodist, the book is redolent of catholic and Catholic sensibilities.

THE CATHOLIC MYSTIQUE: WOMEN CONVERTS TELL THEIR STORIES.
Edited by JENNIFER FERRARA and PATRICIA SODANO IRELAND.
Our Sunday Visitor.
304 pp. $14.95 paper.

A book of conversion stories will strike some as quaint, but the fourteen women contributing to this volume make their decisions, and the events leading up to their decisions, seem urgently contemporary. The stories are in various ways embroiled with the cultural and religious churnings of our time and each bears testimony to the appropriateness of the decision of the editors, both of whom were Lutheran clergy, to conclude the book with Francis Thompson's "Hound of Heaven."

RISE, LET US BE ON OUR WAY.
By JOHN PAUL II.
Warner. 230 pp. $22.95.

Ten years ago, *Crossing the Threshold of Hope* was a publishing sensation, and deservedly so. Those personal reflections by John Paul II provided a remarkably fresh and intimate entree to understanding his life and ministry, and along the way touched interestingly, even provocatively, on sundry controverted questions in contemporary Catholicism. The new book is similarly packaged but is much more limited in scope. He is writing mainly to bishops about what it means to be a bishop and, while students of the Pope will relish revealing autobiographical passages, the book is unlikely to have the mass appeal of *Crossing the Threshold of Hope*. Sections on the connections that he believes have been providentially forged between Christ and the history of Poland are especially striking. Those who believe that he will in the future be known as John Paul the Great will not fail to find in this new book additional evidence in support of their confidence.

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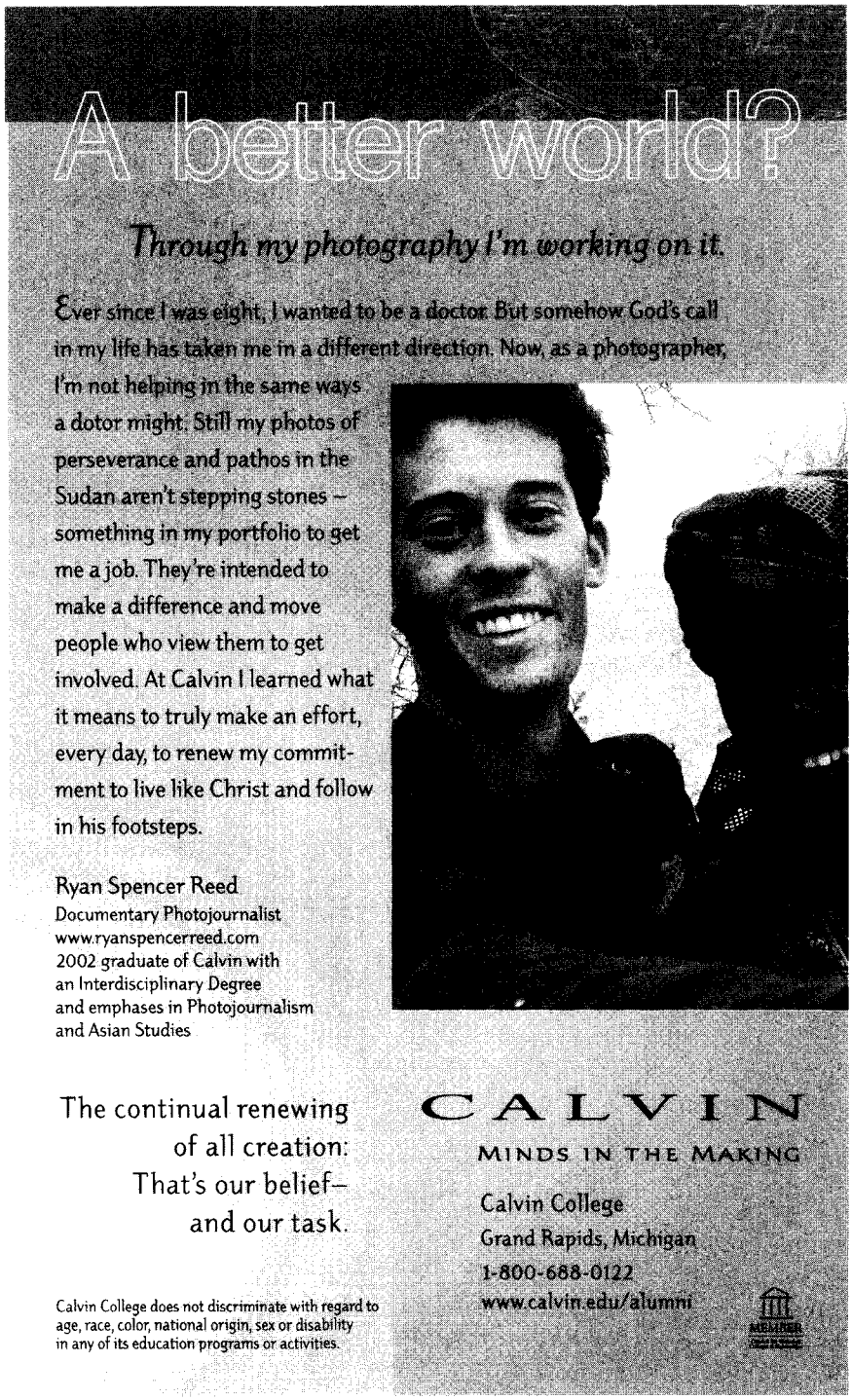
THE END OF ILLUSIONS: RELIGIOUS LEADERS CONFRONT HITLER'S GATHERING STORM.
Edited by JOSEPH LOCONTE.
Rowman & Littlefield.
254 pp. $24.95 paper.

Some of the names are still familiar to the literate: Reinhold Niebuhr, Harry Emerson Fosdick, Lewis Mumford, and Stephen Wise. The great question was U.S. entry into World War II and Loconte divides the fourteen authors collected here into "The Peacemakers" and "The Prophets." Seldom in Christian history, Loconte writes in his historically illuminating introduction, were piety and pacifism so closely identified as in 1940. Of course the U.S. did enter and most of the "peacemakers" came around to support the war. It is easy to point out dissimilarities between Hitler and the current threat of terrorism, but Loconte is surely right in accenting that the religious and moral arguments, then and now, are strikingly similar. The book is a useful contribution toward putting today's debates into historical context.

A PASSION FOR FREEDOM.
By LEONARD SUSSMAN.
Prometheus. 432 pp. $32.

The author was for twenty years executive director of Freedom House, a New York–based institute that has been one of the most relentless defenders of the oppressed, no matter what the ideological stripe of the oppressor. This memoir recalls Sussman's encounters with both world leaders and human rights activists, and has a chapter on his extensive involvement with the American Jewish Council, a longstanding opponent of Zionism. Sussman and the Council urge a delinking of the State of Israel from "the Jewish people," letting the former become a secular democratic state. They support the 1885 Pittsburgh Platform of the Reform rabbinate which declares, "America is our Zion." Among American Jews, or at least among most Jewish organizations, that is today a distinctly minority position. Especially unwelcome is the criticism of Israeli treatment of Palestinians from 1948, the founding of the state, to the present. Many who admire Sussman's leadership of Freedom House deplore his determined association with anti-Zionism, which may help explain why his very readable memoir is published by the distinctly nonmainstream Prometheus publishing house.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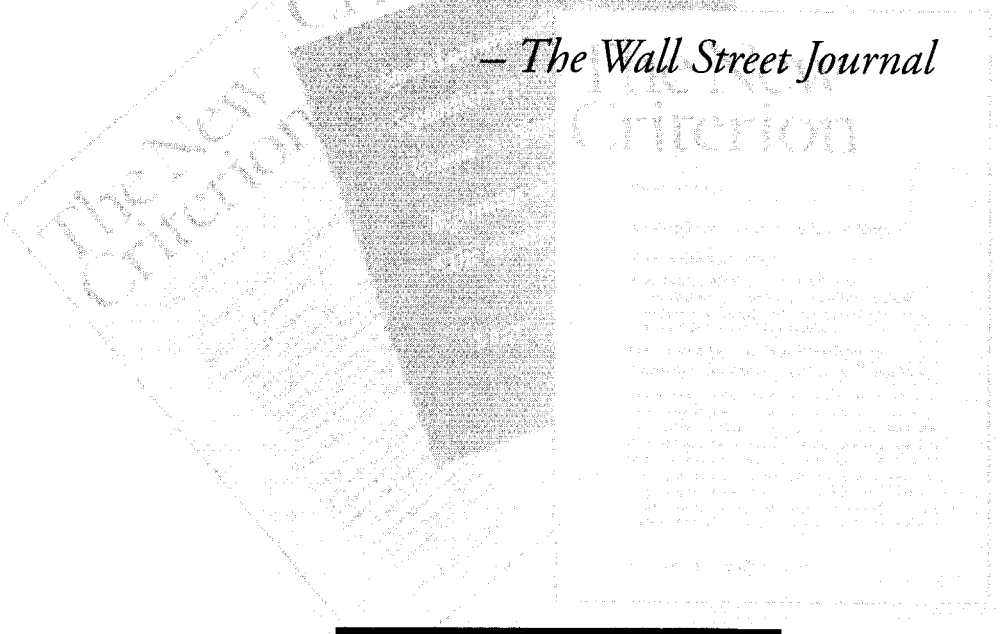

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STREET SAINTS: RENEWING AMERICA'S CITIES.
By BARBARA J. ELLIOTT.
Templeton.
320 pp. $24.95.

A textbook showcasing how George W. Bush's faith-based "armies of compassion" are fighting the good fight in cities all over America. Working with street gangs, illegal immigrants, broken families, and a host of others in deep trouble, mainly volunteer programs turn around lives and turn fate into opportunity. The accounts are largely uncritical and sometimes a bit too breathless, but this is a book to have at hand when responding to those who claim that faith-based initiatives are nothing more than a good idea.

ROMAN CATHOLIC POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY.
By JAMES V. SCHALL.
Lexington. 207 pp. $65.

From his many years of teaching political philosophy at Georgetown University, Father James V. Schall distills the most important things he has learned and has tried to convey to his students. Especially valuable is his drawing out the implications for political philosophy of John Paul II's encyclical on faith and reason (*Fides et Ratio*), which he does in sometimes provocative ways. Fr. Schall knows that the "Roman" in his title may offend but is unapologetic in his belief that there is something singular to be discovered by everyone in the wisdom of Rome.

UNIVERSAL SALVATION? THE CURRENT DEBATE.
Edited by ROBIN A. PARRY and CHRISTOPHER H. PARTRIDGE.
Eerdmans.
319 pp. $27 paper.

The debate over whether, in the end, all will be saved really got started with Origen in the third century and, among Catholics, was more recently reignited by Hans Urs von Balthasar. In this book, evangelical Protestant theologians and philosophers take up the debate, with philosopher Thomas Talbott strongly contending that Scripture supports universalism, and ten other writers mostly disagreeing, some with important qualifications. The debate will probably never go away short of the End Time when we will know for sure, and it is here conducted with intelligence and civility.

CONFIDENCE GAMES: MONEY AND MARKETS IN A WORLD WITHOUT REDEMPTION.
By MARK C. TAYLOR.
University of Chicago Press.
394 pp. $32.50.

The author strings together a multitude of mini-essays on topics mainly economic while incriminating human follies from a postmodernist perspective. His most particular passion is against evangelicals and the nefarious influence of conservative Christians in the public square. His remedy is to propose that they trade in their religion for one that can "engender uncertainty, leave things fuzzy, and make people insecure." It sounds like a winner.

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The Public Square

A Continuing Survey of Religion, Culture, and Public Life

Richard John Neuhaus

One Little Word

It is an unprecedented "but," although I expect it will turn out to be ephemeral. My unscientific survey of reactions to the November election led me to read, for the first time in months, an editorial in the *New York Times*. The gist of the editorial, published the day after, is that President Bush does not have a mandate. He does, however, have a chance of being a great President if in his second term he follows the instructions of the *New York Times*. No surprises there. Then this: "This page will never give up our commitment to women's right to reproductive choice, as well as full civil rights for people of all sexual orientations. *But* a leader who was prepared to make political sacrifices in order to stake a claim to that middle ground could be laying the foundation for a new national consensus that might finally bring the nation's social wars to an end" (emphasis added). The "middle ground" in question is defined as "providing gay couples with the right to have some kind of civil unions, and guaranteeing women the right to legal abortion in most, if not all, cases."

This is an extraordinary change for the *Times*, and I am not at all sure it will be a lasting change. Until now, the paper's devotion to the unlimited abortion license and same-sex marriage has been absolute. At least in the immediate aftermath of the election, the editors recognize that that position is political suicide. On abortion, the fact is, and has been for years, that 80 percent of Americans believe that abortion should not be legal for the reasons that 95 percent of abortions are procured. The "leader" who is likely being given editorial permission to make "political sacrifices" in order to claim the "middle ground" is Senator Hillary Clinton. She would not have to do much. She could say that, while she personally supports it, the nation is not ready for same-sex marriage. She could oppose partial birth abortion and support very modest measures such as parental notification in the case of minors seeking abortion. That would alienate a small number of pro-abortion extremists, but they may be deemed politically expendable. And even they might recognize the necessity of "political sacrifices" to save most of what the Supreme Court handed them in *Roe v. Wade*. The great pay-off is that Democrats could present themselves as "flexible," and their candidate could run in 2008 as "moderately pro-choice"—or even, with enough definitional sleight of hand, as "pro-life."

The *Times* editorial of November 4 may be just a trial balloon. Or that editorial "but" may signal the next major reconfiguration of cultural and political alignments in our public life. What the editors call the "social wars" could be brought to an end, or at least effectively marginalized. It is significant that they are suing for terms. Until November 3, they would settle for nothing less than unqualified victory. What would it take to end or effectively marginalize the culture wars? On the most hotly contested issue of abortion, it might mean a limitation to the first month or so, with exceptions for rape, incest, and direct threat to the life of the mother. Or a reversal of *Roe v. Wade* with the entire question returned to the states. Such developments would not be morally sufficient but might be enough to remove abortion from the center stage of American politics

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as the central issue of the culture wars. Again, that editorial "but" may soon be withdrawn, but on this issue the *Times* is the bellwether and the unprecedented signal of a readiness to temper its absolutism could be very important indeed.

FT

THE END OF OBSCENITY

Forget about obscenity, writes Jeffrey Rosen in the *New Atlantis*, the new journal published by the Ethics and Public Policy Center. Already back in 1973, the Supreme Court was caving when it adopted (in *Miller v. California*) an impossible-to-maintain distinction between hard-core and soft-core pornography, with the latter limited to adults. The idea of judging by "community standards" was short-lived. Ten years after *Miller*, a federal court ruled that "detailed portrayals of genitalia, sexual intercourse, fellatio, and masturbation" are not obscene "in light of community standards prevailing in New York City." Not if the measure is what was then the X-rated Times Square area, which has in recent years been turned into a "family friendly environment." But those court rulings were in the days before the Internet. Rosen, who is the *New Republic*'s regular on legal matters, cites data from a number of studies. For instance, one fourth of search engine requests every day are for pornographic material. Far below, one notes, the number of requests that fall into the broad category of "religion." So Chesterton's nation with the soul of a church has not closed down its whorehouses. What else is new?

Men make up 65 percent of visitors to porn sites, reports Rosen. No surprise there. Then there is this: "Moreover, 15 percent of teens (ages twelve to seventeen) and 25 percent of older boys (ages fifteen to seventeen) have lied about their age to access an Internet site, according to the Pew research center." Only 15 and 25 percent? That strikes me as encouragingly low for boys in those hyper-hormonal years, considering that lying involves nothing more than pushing a button and nobody will know (except, apparently, the people at Pew). Rosen cites international data: 40 percent of adults in Spain, 25 percent in Britain, and 19 percent in Sweden, have visited what he calls "an adult site," meaning, of course, an adolescent site, all pornography being adolescent. He concludes from this that "there is no country in which consumption of hard-core pornography could plausibly be said to be 'patently offensive' to the average person by applying contemporary community standards."

I suppose it depends on the meaning of "average." If 75 percent of adults in Britain have not visited porn sites, despite their ready availability in the privacy of one's home, might not that have a bearing on what is average? I expect that more than 20 percent of Americans have gotten drunk at some time, which hardly means that they, never mind all those who haven't, think that drunkenness is not patently offensive. That a minority of a population gets drunk from time to time or furtively—and possibly with feelings of shame and guilt—watch pornography is hardly the measure of "community standards." Unless, of course, the majority of the Supreme Court is doing the measuring. At this point, Rosen reaches more solid ground. It is not, he notes, the standards of the American people that matter but the opinion of the Court. There probably is nothing to be done about obscenity or pornography if the last word is the Court's ruling on sexual autonomy in *Lawrence v. Texas*, which established a constitutional right to sodomy.

The Sweet Mystery Again

In that decision, Justice Anthony Kennedy, writing for the majority, repeated the "sweet mystery of life" rule that was first announced in *Casey v. Planned Parenthood* (1992) in upholding the unlimited abortion license: "At the heart of liberty is the right to define one's own concept of existence, of meaning, of the universe, and of the mystery of human life." Ah yes, those are no doubt the solemn questions pondered by a middle-aged sex addict visiting a site titled "Hot Dudes Do Dixie Chicks." Rosen correctly observes: "Now that moral disapprobation is not considered a constitutionally rational reason for restricting behavior, no definition of obscenity that relied on communal disapproval could easily pass constitutional scrutiny, unless one could demonstrate a clear harm to others." He thinks that John Stuart Mill's "harm principle" may still forbid child pornography. I expect he underestimates the influence of experts willing and eager to testify that it's good for the kiddies. He entertains the possibility that the next thing to be decriminalized is incest between consenting adults, at least if they are "using birth control." The legal requirement that brothers and sisters, or fathers and daughters, use contraception may strike one as a flagrant violation of their constitutional right to define for themselves the "the mystery of human life."

The editors of the *New Atlantic* paired Rosen's article with an essay by David Hart, "The Pornography Culture." Hart is perhaps a bit too vain about not being a lawyer, but it does help him to view the Supreme Court's rulings on pornography with something suspiciously like common sense. "It is difficult

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for me to grasp," writes Hart, "why the Court works upon the premise that whatever means are employed to protect children from Internet pornography should involve the barest minimum imposition possible upon the free expression of pornographers." He fails to appreciate that the Court has long since decided that pornographers have a constitutional right to do what they do, but there are still inhibitions about their doing it with children or aiming their product at children. We are not yet prepared for the unbounded flight of the liberty affirmed in the "sweet mystery of life" doctrine.

As for the harm principle, Hart again indulges in dangerous flirtation with common sense. "The damage that pornography can do—to minds or cultures—is not by any means negligible. Especially in our modern age of passive entertainment, saturated as we are by an unending storm of noises and images and barren prattle, portrayals of violence or of sexual degradation possess a remarkable power to permeate, shape, and deprave the imagination; and the imagination is, after all, the wellspring of desire, of personality, of character. Anyone who would claim that constant or even regular exposure to pornography does not affect a person at the profoundest level of consciousness is either singularly stupid or singularly degenerate." Here Hart betrays his insouciant indifference to jurisprudential precedent, quite ignoring the fact that the Court has long since made the discovery that one man's stupidity is another's genius, and that one man's degeneracy is another's poetry. Hart goes so far as to say that our courts, reflecting our culture, are confusing liberty with license.

Recognizing, as Hart does, that "we are already a casually and chronically pornographic society," one is left wondering what might be done about it. With the Child Online Protection Act, Congress tried to outlaw certain kinds of pornography, while the Supreme Court ruled that the act was not sufficiently solicitous of the rights of legitimate pornographers. That these questions are left to Congress and the Court reveals, says Hart, our supine dependence on the state to impose rules that we are not prepared to impose on ourselves. "We call upon the state to shield us from vice or to set our vices free because we do not have a culture devoted to the good, or dedicated to virtue, or capable of creating a civil society that is hospitable to any freedom more substantial than that of subjective will. This is simply what it is to be modern." Hart ends with the always pertinent reminder that there is a permanent tension between the biblical tradition and that of liberal democracy. "We belong to a kingdom not of this world; while we are bound to love our country, we are forbidden to regard it as our true home." To which let all the people of God say, "Amen."

However: I think it both unnecessary and unwise to resign ourselves to the inevitability of liberal democracy ending up in the cesspool of libertinism. The founders spoke of "ordered liberty," liberty ordered to moral truth. Perhaps that understanding of liberty cannot be revived, but it certainly will not be revived if we give up on it. In dissenting from *Lawrence*, Justice Antonin Scalia said it marked the death of laws reflecting a democratically determined sense of morality, of right and wrong. There is a measure of truth in that, but, in the larger picture, all laws reflect a moral judgment about what is right or wrong, fair or unfair, supportive of or opposed to the common good. So long as we are a relatively free society, politics, including law, will be a process of, as Aristotle would instruct us, deliberating how we ought to order our life together. The "ought" in that formulation signals the inescapably moral character of the enterprise. Justice Kennedy's notion of "the heart of liberty" is a sure formula for the undoing of law itself. It may not stand. Court majorities come and go. The courage of legislators to challenge judicial tyranny waxes and wanes.

A Transitional Homeland

Admittedly, history does not provide many examples of the revival of liberal democracies that turned against their founding principles in culture and morality. In fact, no examples come readily to mind. The very consideration is haunted by the memory of the Weimar Republic. Whatever happens, in times doleful and times hopeful, we must never forget our true home or the anticipation of that home in the life of the Church. The second century *Letter to Diognetus* says that, for Christians, "every foreign country is a homeland, every homeland a foreign country." In this foreign country that is our temporary homeland, it may now be decided that the law is not permitted to take cognizance of virtue and vice. What is decided can, sometimes, be undecided. If that turns out not to be possible in this liberal democracy of unprecedented influence, the world will be a much darker place. The Church and the promise it bears and anticipates will increasingly be posited, not by our choice, against this constitutional order. That may well be the future; and for that future we must be braced, and work to equip the next generation for heroic fidelity. Both Rosen and Hart recognize that the dispute over obscenity is but part of a larger dispute over the connections between law, culture, and morality. Both seem to be resigned to the sundering of those connections.

Hart recognizes that rulings on obscenity are "nowhere near as apocalyptic" in their implications as *Roe v. Wade*'s imposition of the unlimited abortion

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license. But, whatever the issue at hand, he says that the biblical and liberal democratic traditions are in inevitable conflict. "What either understands as freedom the other must view as a form of bondage," he writes. The current majority on the Court agrees. American history and, I believe, most of the American people favor the alternative that is ordered liberty. Rosen and Hart may be right that, in an era of globalized googling, there is not much of anything that can be done about obscenity. Except to avoid it and encourage others to do likewise. Anyone suggesting censorship is promptly condemned as a prudish, pinch-lipped advocate of Comstockery. But without censorship, whether in personal or public life, decency is deprived of definition.

To be sure, there is legitimate debate over where to draw the line. The Court's effort to terminate that debate by declaring that no line can be drawn lest it inconvenience those whose definition of the mystery of life excludes decency does not square with a Constitution ordained and established to, as stated in its Preamble, "promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity." No doubt there was pornography in 1787, but I doubt if anyone thought it was among the blessings of liberty that the Constitution was intended to secure. The sociologists on the Court declare original intent outdated by what they discern to be our evolving morality, but some consolation may be drawn from the fact that they are appointed only for life. It is not inconceivable that, at some point in the future, the people, acting through their elected representatives, may be permitted a say in the kind of society they want for themselves and their posterity. In fact, it is quite possible that we saw the beginning of such a change on November 2, 2004.

WHILE WE'RE AT IT

■ Some years ago we published one article titled "It's the Culture, Stupid" (FT April 1994), but in fact many articles in these pages might well bear that title. Some pundits have denied the aptness of the "culture war" metaphor in describing the American circumstance, while others have contended that it may once have been appropriate but is no longer. Then came the 2004 elections. The percentages may change a little upon further analysis, but the immediate aftermath powerfully confirms the culture war thesis. Asked what issue mattered most to them, 22 percent of voters named "moral values." Of those voters, 80 percent went for Bush and 18 for Kerry. Next on the list (20 percent) was "economy/jobs," with 18 percent of those voters going for Bush and 80 percent going for Kerry. A perfect reverse symmetry. Third on the list (19 percent) was "terrorism," on which Bush beat Kerry 86 to 14 percent. So much for the vaunted "economic realists" who claim that the one thing certain is that "the people will always vote their pocketbook." In truth, however, I expect that the great majority of those who named moral values as their top issue also believed that a second Bush term would be good for the economy. People who say the economy is the top issue predictably think the economy is in bad shape, just as those who give priority to moral values think public morality is in trouble. A Democratic ploy is to pit moral values against the economy, but that is just that, a ploy. The likelihood is that most people voting for Bush thought he would be better both for moral values and for the economy. Here's an analysis noting that Bush got 56 percent of the white Catholic vote and Kerry only 43 percent "despite Mr. Kerry's being Catholic." One might make the case that that "despite" might as well be "because." Catholics were not amused by a man who seemed so confused about what it means to be Catholic. The perception that he was confused was, I expect, sharpened by the bolder bishops who issued highly publicized reproaches of pro-abortion politicians. The claim that politicians who are thus reproached would get a sympathy vote from people who resent "bishops meddling in politics" seems to be belied by the outcome. Asked what one quality mattered most in choosing a President, people who named religious faith went 91 percent for Bush. Of all voters who attend church more than once a week, 61 percent went for Bush and 39 percent for Kerry. Of those who never attend church, the numbers were exactly reversed. Bush did much better (44 percent) with Hispanic voters than in 2000, but there was slight movement among blacks (up two points to 11 percent). The issue of same-sex marriage had gained traction with many black ministers, but that apparently had little effect on black voters, who remain a securely taken-for-granted segment of the Democratic "base." It is a great pity. A people with the highest rate of the poor locked in a culture of crime and dependency, and with 20 million of their children missing because of abortion, continues to follow leaders who have made a deal with powers that clearly do not have their interests at heart. What Gunnar Myrdal in 1944 called the American dilemma has sixty years later turned into the black American embarrassment. These, then, are some of the perti-

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nent data in the immediate aftermath of the election that underscore the ascendancy of the religious-moral-cultural matrix of American politics. Whether one approves or disapproves of the electoral consequences, it is not a good thing that the two parties are so sharply divided in this way. Republicans are understandably and with great success exploiting a division created by Democrats, most importantly by their don't-give-an-inch support for the unlimited abortion license decreed by *Roe v. Wade*. In the reconfiguration of our public life, including electoral politics, January 22, 1973, is the most important date of the last half-century on the American calendar.

■ Not everyone on the left is joining the weeping and gnashing of teeth over the electoral triumph of the threatening theocrats. You've undoubtedly seen the articles claiming that the "moral values" vote really doesn't mean very much. The argument is that the category "moral values" is, unlike "economy/jobs" or "war in Iraq," so vague that it can mean anything or nothing. This is an argument from desperation. If nobody knew what the phrase meant, it would seem that Bush and Kerry voters would have been more or less evenly split on "moral values." Unless, of course, one assumes that Kerry voters are in principle opposed to moral values. As it was, however, all sensate voters understood that "moral values" referred to the candidates' clear differences on abortion, embryonic stem-cell research, a marriage amendment, and, more generally, the role of morality and religion in public life. There is no other plausible explanation of the 80-18 split other than that those who named it as their number one issue thought they knew very well what was meant by "moral values." Back to weeping and gnashing of teeth.

■ The social scientist James Q. Wilson undoubtedly means well, but he goes a claim too far. Writing in the *Wall Street Journal*, he is attempting to counter the hysterics who say November 2 marked the dawning of theocratic totalitarianism. He points out that the left can be, and frequently is, more intolerant than the right, and that what a voter says is the "most important" issue can obscure "the variety of factors that characterize voting preferences." For instance, "What is the vote likely to be in Ohio among gun-owning union members who attend church but who have just lost their jobs and think the U.S. should spend less time fighting wars?" Fair enough. But then this astonishing assertion, "In fact, abortion was not an issue in the election and Messrs. Bush and Kerry both opposed gay marriage." In fact, that is not true. On gay marriage, Bush regularly stated his position in stump speeches and advocated a federal marriage amendment. Kerry mentioned it only when asked and opposed an amendment. On abortion, Bush has repeatedly declared himself pro-life, has steadfastly asserted the goal of "every unborn child protected in law and welcomed in life," and has supported and signed pro-life measures in his first term. Kerry took and never deviated from the NARAL pledge of allegiance to the unlimited abortion license. These were not issues in the election? Does Mr. Wilson think Karl Rove was deluding himself in counting on Bush's "base" among pro-life and pro-family voters? Wilson writes, "It is true that President Bush improved his voting support among people who attend church frequently and who describe themselves as Catholics, Protestants, and Jews, but Sen. Kerry won nearly half of all Catholic votes and over three-fourths of all Jewish ones." Wilson presumably knows but does not mention the huge switch of Catholic voters to Bush, and the fact that the overwhelming majority of Jews never go to church, seldom go to synagogue, and have a deeply entrenched habit of voting Democratic. I recognize and sympathize with what Mr. Wilson was trying to do in his *Wall Street Journal* article. It is true that the election was not about establishing a theocracy. It is equally true that it was not about nothing.

■ Two days after the election *Washington Post* columnist E. J. Dionne catalogued the usual leftist complaints against President Bush in a series of sentences beginning with "We are aghast. . . . We are alarmed. . . . We are amazed. . . . We are disgusted. . . ." He fails to say "We are shocked, shocked . . . ," but I gather he is. He is not about to give up, however. With the true grit of indomitable resolve in the face of catastrophe, he declares that "the independent media must not be intimidated by trumped-up charges of liberal bias." One hopes that nobody has crossed the line by accusing Mr. Dionne of liberal bias.

■ This is poignant. Thomas Friedman of the *New York Times* on the day after the election: "What troubled me yesterday was my feeling that this election was tipped because of an outpouring of support for George Bush by people who don't just favor different policies than I do—they favor a whole different kind of America. We don't just disagree on what America should be doing; we disagree on what America is." Admittedly, Mr. Friedman's portfolio is foreign affairs, but one wonders if he should not have spent a little more time at home over the last thirty years. And one cannot help but wonder whether "tipped" is quite the right word for the outcome of the election.

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■ There is a thin line between *Schadenfreude*, which I take to be measured satisfaction in the discomfiture of opponents, and the sin of morose delectation. I tried not to cross the line in surveying some of the more apocalyptic reactions to the November elections. A contender for first place is Garry Wills' op-ed in the *New York Times* the day after, titled, "The Day the Enlightenment Went Out." He compares America with nations such as Britain, France, and Germany, writing, "The secular states of modern Europe do not understand the fundamentalism of the American electorate. . . . In fact, we now resemble those nations less than we do our putative enemies. Where else do we find fundamentalist zeal, a rage at secularity, religious intolerance, fear of and hatred of modernity? . . . We find it in the Muslim world, in al-Qaeda, in Saddam Hussein's Sunni loyalists." Oh dear, we are in deep trouble. Mr. Wills cites, somewhat improbably, the Dalai Lama as an authority who agrees with him on the importance of the Enlightenment to guard against the evils of religion in public. But his clinching argument that the Enlightenment went out on November 2 is the fact that more Americans believe in the virgin birth than in Darwinism. "Can a people that believes more fervently in the virgin birth than in evolution still be called an Enlightened nation?" His answer is emphatically in the negative, but it is an interesting test question. Mr. Wills insists he is a Catholic (see his recent little book *Why I Am a Catholic*) who believes in the defining doctrines of the faith, so he presumably believes, perhaps even fervently, in the virgin birth. The overwhelming majority of Americans are Christians belonging to bodies that formally subscribe to the consensual tradition of Christian orthodoxy in which the virgin birth is an article of faith. It is clearly supported by Scripture and has been authoritatively taught for two thousand years. Darwin's theory, on the other hand, has been around for somewhat less than 150 years. Leaving aside whether any explanatory theory proposed by scientists should be believed "fervently," Darwinism is propounded by a host of advocates who do not agree on what the theory is, although the more aggressive of them agree that it is not compatible with the biblical account of reality. Moreover, most people do not spend a great deal of time pondering theories about the origin of species. It is not a matter of life or death touching on their eternal destiny, whereas the virgin birth is inseparably related to the incarnation, the person and work of Jesus the Christ, and the hope of salvation. Why on earth does Mr. Wills think that anybody, apart from a few ideological fanatics, should believe in a theory of evolution as fervently as they believe in the virgin birth? It is to be feared that the election was simply too much for the delicately nuanced mind of Garry Wills.

■ Late in the campaign John Kerry convened "an informal group of fellow Catholics" to "shape his message" in order to "solidify his support among Catholics and undecided voters." The result was a speech in which he defended his pro-abortion position saying, "I love my church, I respect the bishops, but I respectfully disagree." According to Religion News Service, the informal group included Victoria Reggie, the wife of Senator Ted Kennedy, and Father Leo O'Donovan, S.J., former president of Georgetown University, a school "in the Jesuit tradition."

■ One of the problems with a literalistic "Bible only" approach to Christian thought is that it has no place for the role of reason or a tradition of authoritative interpretation. Here is an article by a Christian ethicist attacking the idea that abortion should be a decisive, or even a really major factor, in how a Christian votes. There are so many other issues, such as war, capital punishment, poverty, world development, and on and on. Interestingly, he invokes the Catholic bishops on "a consistent ethic of life." But of course there is no reference to the document of the same bishops, *Living the Gospel of Life*, or to their statement of June 2004, on the singularity of abortion in making political decisions. One probably should not expect from a Protestant writer any allusion to magisterial teaching, such as John Paul II's encyclical *Evangelium Vitae*. The author does acknowledge that the first century "Didache" condemns abortion, but qualifies that by noting that the condemnation "does not stand alone." The clincher in this way of thinking, however, is succinctly stated: "Nor does Scripture give us any precise definition of what constitutes innocent life." There you have the widely and rightly criticized fundamentalist approach: if it ain't in the Bible—and explicitly and precisely so—it ain't necessarily so. The author of the essay is Father John Coleman, S.J., professor of moral theology at Loyola Marymount University, Los Angeles.

■ Duke University's Stanley Hauerwas has insisted over the years that Christian thinkers "must not do ethics for Caesar." In this view, doing ethics for Caesar (meaning the government) is an exercise of "statecraft" that constitutes formal cooperation with this oppressive liberal regime that is set against the lordship of Christ. Some might be surprised, therefore, to find Professor Hauerwas as an endorser of an advertisement in the *New York Times* sponsored by "Church Folks for a Better America," which is a project of "Peace Action Education Fund," which is a project of

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"Coalition for Peace Action." The ad condemns the Bush administration's policy in Iraq, declaring that "the time has come to bring this unjust and ill-considered war to an end." It goes on to make a number of positive recommendations, such as "a truly international peacekeeping force to be established by the United Nations." It does read very much like doing ethics for Caesar, and not very thoughtful ethics at that. The ad says, "We are Christians, from different communions. And citizens who span the political spectrum." Span: as in far left to liberal left. The ad appeared nine days before the presidential election. The radical call to costly discipleship prescribed by Hauerwas' mentor John Yoder and his *The Politics of Jesus* requires a bold and uncompromising commitment to defy what St. Paul calls the principalities and powers of the present time. With unflinching resolution, Hauerwas and friends courageously risk the wrath of the liberal academy and issue a clarion call for Christians to take up the cross and, despising the cost, prove their radical fidelity to the lordship of Jesus: Vote for John Kerry. Thus do the soaring flights of theological rhetoric make a crash landing in the thoroughly conventional moral posturings of partisan politics.

■ In both Catholic and evangelical Protestant commentaries prior to the election, there was a notable turn on the abortion question in the arguments adopted by those supporting John Kerry. When it became evident that Kerry was standing by his unqualified pledge of allegiance to NARAL, Planned Parenthood, and other "abortion rights" organizations, some of his backers were in an awkward position. They were not notably pro-life, but neither did they want to be viewed as pro-abortion. To escape their dilemma, they took the line that neither candidate could, as President, do anything substantive in protecting the unborn. *Roe v. Wade* and its judicial offspring, they said, had removed the question of abortion from the possibility of political remedy. Therefore Bush's pro-life statements amounted to nothing more than posturing, and Catholics and evangelicals were free to vote on the basis of other issues on which a President could make a real difference. Of course that argument conveniently overlooked the fact that—on partial birth abortion, on infants surviving attempted abortion, on embryonic stem-cell research, on U.S. funding of abortion promotion, and on other questions—Bush has acted in ways directly opposite to Kerry's declared positions. Most important, the argument evaded the overridingly important question of presidential appointments to federal courts, including the Supreme Court. I am frequently asked whether I think *Roe* will ever be overturned. Court decisions are sometimes directly overturned; more often they are bypassed, incrementally undermined, or quietly retired. It is reasonable to hope that this will eventually happen to *Roe*. Here and there in the judiciary, one sees signs of that happening. For instance, some of the lower court rulings against the ban on partial birth abortion (the practice of killing an infant just before she has completely emerged from the birth canal) are markedly unhappy that the Supreme Court in *Roe* prevented judges from doing the right thing. Of interest in this connection is the five-page separate opinion by Judge Edith Jones of the federal appeals court in New Orleans in *McCorvey v. Hill*. Norma McCorvey, it may be remembered, was the "Jane Roe" of *Roe v. Wade*. Years later, she did a complete turnaround, becoming a devout Christian and ardent pro-life advocate. Her attempt to reopen the original lawsuit thirty years later was rejected by the federal appeals court, but not without having scored very important points. Judge Jones, agreeing with the late Justice Byron White, calls *Roe* an "exercise in raw judicial power." The evidence presented in *McCorvey*, she writes, "goes to the balance *Roe* struck between the choice of the mother and the life of her unborn child." The balance struck by *Roe*, she notes, cannot stand up under the accumulation of new evidence about, among other things, the damage done to women by abortion, the excruciating pain experienced by the child being aborted, increased alternatives to abortion for women with unwanted pregnancies, and what is now scientifically established beyond doubt about the beginning of human life. Supreme Court rulings, Judge Jones complains, "have rendered basic abortion policy beyond the power of our legislative bodies." The "perverse result" of *Roe*, says Jones, "is that the facts no longer matter." Her conclusion is a sharp reproach of the Supreme Court: "Hard and social science will of course progress even though the Supreme Court averts its eyes. . . . One may fervently hope that the Court will someday acknowledge such developments and re-evaluate *Roe*. That the Court's constitutional decision-making leaves our nation in a position of willful blindness to evolving knowledge should trouble any dispassionate observer not only about the abortion decisions, but about a number of other areas in which the Court unhesitatingly steps into the realm of social policy under the guise of constitutional adjudication." Will *Roe v. Wade*, in one way or another, ever be nullified? The answer is very probably Yes, when there are two or three more Justices like Judge Edith Jones on the Supreme Court. And that, contrary to the tortured argument of putative opponents of abortion who voted for John Kerry, had everything to do with who would be President.

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■ Monsignor George A. Kelly has died. Born in 1916 and ordained a priest in 1942, Kelly was a legend in the New York Archdiocese and the nation. Feisty is the word that inevitably comes to mind. Ralph McInerny has remarked that if Kelly had gone into the movies instead of the priesthood, Jimmy Cagney would have spent his life as an Irish bartender. With a promptitude that many thought impolite, Kelly early on protested the dawning of the silly season following the Second Vatican Council. In 1979, Doubleday published his *Battle for the American Church* in which Kelly contended, "A guerrilla-type warfare is going on inside the Church and its outcome is clearly doubtful. . . . The issues at stake are the correctness of Catholic doctrine and the survival of the Catholic Church as a significant influence in the life of her own communicants." Kelly was a happy warrior, smiting his opponents hip and thigh, but wishing them no real harm other than diminished influence. In addition to parish duties and his writing, Kelly taught social science at St. John's University for many years and founded the Fellowship of Catholic Scholars. George Kelly was splendid company and, as a raconteur, among the masters. May he be welcomed on the far side of Jordan by the happy host of those who bear the scars of having fought the good fight.

■ If you don't like the Constitution, you can always rewrite it. Or resort to the creative use of ellipses. The American Civil Liberties Union has an impressive website on free speech. The opening paragraph introducing the website is this: "It is probably no accident that freedom of speech is the first freedom mentioned in the First Amendment: 'Congress shall make no law . . . abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press, or of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.' The Constitution's framers believed that freedom of inquiry and liberty of expression were the hallmarks of a democratic society." The first freedom mentioned in the First Amendment is, of course, the free exercise of religion. It appears that among the liberties championed by the ACLU is that of taking liberties with the text of the Constitution.

■ Back when the Lambeth Conference said that homosexual practices are not compatible with scriptural teaching, retired Episcopal bishop John Spong opined that the ultraconservative position is attributable to pressure from culturally backward African bishops who are only a generation removed from the jungle. It was later pointed out here that the African bishops, who govern dioceses many times the size of their American counterparts, are also much better educated than the American bishops, with many of them having earned advanced degrees at European and American universities (While We're At It, FT May 2000). Gene Robinson, the gay New Hampshire bishop, now tries a different explanation of why Africans and others oppose the attempt of American Episcopalians to overthrow traditional teaching on sexuality. "I've had people say to me that in developing countries, people don't see any difference between you and George Bush, and this is being experienced as yet one more unilateral action on the part of Americans, and we're sick of it and we're not going to take it anymore," he said. "I'm not saying there aren't theological issues, scriptural issues and so on, but I do think that . . . may have something to do with the vociferousness of the debate." Add to the sidelining of the United Nations and the alienation of "Old Europe" George W. Bush's responsibility for the breakup of the Anglican communion.

■ Statistics and other lies. Here is another article claiming that life expectancy a hundred years ago was only forty-seven years while today it is seventy-six years. Such figures are used for a number of mischievous purposes. They play into fear-mongering about a health care crisis for the elderly, a problem that is severe enough without its being exaggerated. We are regularly told that the permanence of marriage is antiquated because in the old days, given life expectancy, the commitment was only for twenty years or so. Andrew Greeley, the sociologist, has for years been citing the misleading data in support of his argument for term limits for the priesthood. In the old days, he claims, ordination was not for fifty or sixty years since priests, like everyone else, died early. Of course this is patent nonsense, as anyone knows who has wandered through an old cemetery and noted the dates on the tombstones. If that doesn't convince you, the facts of the matter are readily available from the U.S. government's National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS). The great difference from a century ago is the dramatic reduction in deaths from infant and childhood diseases, thanks largely to the discovery of antibiotics. According to NCHS data, in 1900 a twenty-year-old white man had a life expectancy of 62.2 years. In 2000, it was 75.7 years. In 1900, a twenty-year-old white woman had a life expectancy of 73.7 years, compared with 80.7 in 2000. Pertinent to claims about the elderly living so much longer today, in 1900 a seventy-year-old white man lived on average to 79.3 years, compared with eighty-three years in 2000. In 1900, a seventy-year-old white woman lived to 85.2 years, compared with 93.2 years in 2000. These are significant differences, to be sure, and the cumulative effect

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does pose serious questions for the care of the elderly. But the data do not support claims that we need to change major institutions in order to accommodate dramatically changed life expectancies. Whether the wedding bond was for fifty-four years or sixty-one years, for the woman getting married in 1900 or in 2000, marriage was marriage. Whether at ordination a man expected to be a priest for thirty-seven years or forty-eight years, ordination was ordination. Of course more people get divorced today and, in the last several decades, many priests abandoned their priesthood. Whatever the reasons for that, nobody should blame the actuarial tables. We live longer today, although not so much longer as is commonly claimed, but that has little or no bearing on how we live the years that are ours.

■ It may be that nobody in the last twenty years has done as much as N. T. Wright to make solid biblical scholarship accessible to educated but nonspecialist Christians. From the eighteenth century on, beginning with H. S. Reimarus, scholars have been engaged in several phases of "the quest for the historical Jesus," opening the way for innumerable reconstructions and fantasies, the latest of which is the phenomenally popular *The Da Vinci Code*. When understandably confused readers ask for a reliable guide on the question of what is and is not known about Jesus, I frequently direct them to N. T. Wright. For a readable introduction to Wright's work, I recommend *The Challenge of Jesus: Rediscovering Who Jesus Was and Is* (Intervarsity). Wright's most recent and massive (817 page) book is *The Resurrection of the Son of God* (Fortress). It is well worth the investment of time and money. Wright, who is now the Anglican bishop of Durham, is sometimes treated condescendingly by the academic guild. It is the common fate of scholars who commit the unpardonable sin of writing in a way that nonspecialists can understand. Here is a review of his latest book in *Theology Today* that sniffingly refers to him as "a worldwide celebrity lecturer" and suggests that the book will be welcomed by "Wright fans." Wright is a proponent of "narrative realism," meaning both that the biblical accounts are the only accounts we have of the person and work of Jesus and that those accounts provide the most convincing evidence for what Christians believe about the person and work of Jesus. The review by Pheme Perkins of Boston College takes an interesting twist. Many scholars of a liberal bent take delight in undermining what ordinary Christians believe. Perkins attempts a different tack: "Wright's insistence on a univocal understanding of Christian eschatology leads him to attack the faith of ordinary believers. At best, the 'in heaven' and 'with the Lord' language is only about the intermediate state of the dead. Our funeral sermons should not promise the happy life in heaven or an immediate transition out of the body by an immortal soul. Easter refers to God's recreation, to the restoration of God's righteous ones in that creation, not to an individual hope for a next life or for life continued in a new sphere of reality. This principled rejection leaves one wondering what the pastoral significance of Wright's project will turn out to be." This is a clever move, trying to make it appear that Wright is the one who is undermining the faith of orthodox believers. It is too clever by half. In fact, the biblical account is inseparably tied to the covenant with Israel and its fulfillment in Jesus the Messiah who, as resurrected Lord, promises a final (eschatological) restoration of all things. Later Christian thinkers would find a place in orthodox belief for ideas such as the immortality of the soul, but Wright is a biblical scholar, not a philosophical theologian. The truth is that many funeral sermons confidently asserting that the deceased is now in heaven and enjoying eternal bliss are exercises in presumption that are without warrant in biblical testimony or the theological tradition. We commend the faithful departed to the mercy of God and, if we are Catholic, pray that they are on their way (the way called purgatory) to glory, but we do not presume to know their final disposition. (Those whom the Church formally declares to be saints constitute a special case, but that's a question for another time.) The great merit of N. T. Wright's work is that he makes a reasonable and convincing case for the reliability of the biblical accounts, and that he compels us to keep whatever we say or think about the faithful departed inseparably tied to the life, death, resurrection, and promised return of Jesus the Christ.

■ In October Archbishop Timothy Dolan of Milwaukee delivered our eighteenth annual Erasmus Lecture. He follows in the train of distinguished Erasmus lecturers, including Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, Peter Berger, Paul Johnson, Jean-Marie Cardinal Lustiger, Rabbi David Novak, and Mary Ann Glendon. To a packed house of about five hundred, Dolan, who is a student of American Catholic history, told the story of "conciliarism" in America. In the eighteenth century, Catholic bishops assiduously attended to the internal (*ad intra*) urgencies of building the infrastructure of Catholicism in this country. With World War I and the New Deal, they turned outward (*ad extra*) to address, frequently in a "prophetic" mode, the problems of the surrounding society. The "heyday" of *ad extra* efforts, said Dolan, was the 1980s with pastoral letters on nuclear deterrence and the economy. Following the crises of recent years, the attention of the

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bishops and their national conference is again turning to the *ad intra* questions of catechizing, church discipline, and the renewal of sacramental life. As is the usual practice with the Erasmus Lecture, the next day we held a scholars conference of people associated with FIRST THINGS in order to engage the questions raised by Archbishop Dolan. There was a lively discussion of many things, not least being whether the *ad intra/ad extra* distinction still holds. For instance, episcopal discipline of public figures who publicly support the unlimited abortion license would seem to be *ad intra*, yet it raised an *ad extra* storm of controversy in the political arena. We hope to be publishing the Archbishop's lecture in the near future, and of course the questions he raised will continue to receive careful attention in these pages. Next year's Erasmus Lecturer will be Timothy George, Dean of Beeson Divinity School, a Baptist institution. Dr. George is, among his many distinctions, an invaluable participant in Evangelicals and Catholics Together.

■ As is well known, the constitution of the European Union very pointedly makes no reference to Christianity in its preamble alluding to European identity. This fall the leaders of member nations gathered in Rome to formally sign the constitution. The signing took place on the Capitolino, a beautiful square designed by Michelangelo. The leaders were photographed sitting beneath a huge statue of the fifth-century Pope Innocent I. In the same room is a fine bust of the emperor Constantine. One expects that some of the politicians had a hard time remembering that Christ-ianity played no part in the formation of Europe.

■ The *Daily Telegraph* of London reports that German archaeologists have discovered the lavatory on which Martin Luther wrote the Ninety-Five Theses that launched the Protestant Reformation. "'This is a great find,' Stefan Rhein, the director of the Luther Memorial Foundation, said, 'particularly because we're talking about someone whose texts we have concentrated on for years, while little attention has been paid to anything three-dimensional and human behind them.'" Perhaps the infelicity is in the translation.

■ "Why do you hate us?" That, says Mustafa Akyol, writing in the *American Enterprise*, is a question frequently put to Muslims by Americans. "The first answer from someone like me, who is repulsed by terrorists who kill in the name of Islam, is that most of us do not hate you. Yet it must be acknowledged that radical Muslim rage is real in many countries." A major source of such rage is the moral decadence of American society as communicated by Hollywood and other media. Akyol writes: "This distaste derives not only from culture but also from ideas. When 'Western ideas' are mentioned, many Muslims think not of Jefferson, C. S. Lewis, Lincoln, or Burke, but rather of Nietzsche, Freud, Marx, and Carl Sagan. The behavior of some Westernized local elites in Muslim countries makes the situation even worse. In my country of Turkey, one popular stereotype of the Westernized Turk is of the soulless, skirt- and money-chasing man drinking whiskey while swearing at Islam. Although a caricature, it carries enough truth to further a bad image of the West. . . . Obviously, that is a distortion of the truth. America stands out in the Western world as 'a nation under God,' particularly compared to 'Old Europe.' The aggressive secularism of Europe is one reason why European Muslims are especially radicalized. (Another spur is the lesser opportunities for upward mobility in Europe as compared to America.) As a Muslim, I feel at home in America when I see people saying grace at the table, praising the Lord, filling houses of worship, and handling currency inscribed 'In God We Trust.' When I'm in Europe, on the other hand, with its empty cathedrals, widespread atheism, and joyless cynicism, I feel alienated." So what is to be done? "To erase this false image, America must help Muslims see that it is indeed a nation under God. The culture it exports should celebrate more than materialism, disbelief, selfishness, and hedonism. America must do a better job of portraying the principles of decency that undergird its society. Otherwise it will be despised by devout Muslims throughout the world, and radicals will channel contempt into violence. Of course, avoiding radical Islamist rage is only one reason for Americans to resist empty materialism. A deeper reason is that materialism is a mistaken philosophy. If they will save themselves from its disappointments, Americans will enjoy many benefits—including a better chance to win the hearts and minds of the Muslim world, and avert a clash of civilizations."

■ The year 2004 was the 350th anniversary of the arrival of Jews in America. There were a few public events to mark the occasion, but they received slight attention. David Gelernter of Yale considers two books published in the anniversary year: Jonathan Sarna's *American Judaism: A History*, reviewed in these pages by Alan Mittleman (FT May 2004) and Hasia Diner's *Jews of the United States, 1654-2000*. Gelernter likes the former more than the latter, but is finally disappointed with both. Gelernter writes: "Above all, I would want to know where today's American Jews can look for spiritual leadership. What is Judaism? Why should anyone bother being a Jew?

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When people ask me those questions, I tell them that Judaism is the most important intellectual development in history; the deepest, most passionate, and most beautiful of the great family of Judeo-Christian religions it fathered. I tell them that Christianity itself is an allegorical retelling of Jewish history, that Jews are the senior nation of the Western world, that Jewish ideas were decisive to the creation of modern democracy. I mention the Jewish belief that the House of Israel is God's own presence on earth, and that if (God forbid) the Jews should vanish from this world, God would too." Among the many questions raised by that last assertion is the very old one about who is a Jew. Gelernter is especially interested in the contribution of Judaism—not just Jews but Jewish *ideas*—to the American experiment. In this connection, however, he comes close to appropriating the first Americans to the Jewish community. "Turn now to the larger question of influence, the influence of Jewish ideas. The role of classical Israel in the development of the American mind is a hugely significant story. Where does the modern liberal democratic state come from? In part from Britain, especially from the seventeenth-century civil war that set Parliament and the Puritans against the crown, its privileges, and the established church. But that war was itself greatly influenced (via Puritanism) by classical Judaism and the Hebrew Bible. Puritanism can plausibly be read as an effort by modern Christians to transform themselves back into 'Jewish Christians' of the New Testament age—and then to reach back even farther to become God's new 'chosen people.'" Gelernter quotes the historian of American religion, Sidney Ahlstrom, who wrote, "*The Federalist Papers* . . . as well as John Adams' defenses of the American Constitution, can be read as Puritan contributions to Enlightenment political theory." He also notes with satisfaction that "in 1776, three-quarters of American citizens were Puritan." That is stretching the definition of Puritan very thin indeed. But, even if it were accurate, the dubious equation between Puritan and Jewish runs into the inconvenient fact that the Puritans were quite decided about their being Christians. It is true that Christianity is inexplicable apart from Judaism—and not just Jewish "ideas"—but that does not mean Christians are Jews, except possibly in the sense that Franz Rosenzweig called Christianity "Judaism for the Gentiles." Like Karl Rahner's description of non-Christians as "anonymous Christians," Gelernter runs the danger of appropriation by definition, with the result that the achievements of Christian America turn out to be the achievements of Jewish America. In a similar argumentative turn, this past year there was considerable discussion about how Samuel Huntington, in *Who Are We?*, attributed the American achievement to "Anglo-Protestants." He, too, emphasized that he did not mean just those who are English and Protestant but the "core culture" of Anglo-Protestantism. (My reflection on Huntington's argument can be found in FT August/September 2004.) I haven't read the Diner book, but I think Jonathan Sarna is right to let Jews be Jews and Christians be Christians. In the same way, Huntington would have done better to more fully acknowledge that Germans, Italians, Jews, Poles, Swedes, and a host of others have contributed in crucial ways to "who we are" as Americans. Of course Gelernter is right that there would be no Christianity without Judaism, and Huntington is right that there would be no American constitutional democracy without Anglo-Protestants, but we understand our common circumstance better when we respect the discrete identities of all who have contributed to making that circumstance, for better and for worse, what it is.

■ Our circumstance is even more desperate than Samuel Huntington claims. Or so says James Kurth, writing in the *National Interest*. The dissolution of American national identity—an identity grounded, as Huntington puts it, in the "core culture" of Anglo-Protestantism—is far advanced. Our business, academic, and media elites, says Kurth, are united in their devotion to global consciousness, transnationalism, multiculturalism, and other dissolvents of American identity. He says we have been here before: "Of course, there was one earlier era—just a century ago—when the global economy and communications technology of the day seemed to be drawing some business and cultural elites—particularly those in the British Empire—toward a transnational identity. This earlier era of globalization was brought to a crashing halt by the outbreak of World War I. The ensuing mobilization of national economies and national propaganda enhanced national identities around the world. These developments were further reinforced by the Great Depression and World War II, and the era of strong national identities lasted for half a century. It was not until the 1960s that a new era of globalization would begin." Restoring national identity now, writes Kurth, would take an "exogenous shock," such as a direct threat from a nationalist and expansionist China. Barring that, the Anglo-Protestant culture had built into it its own demise, what with its individualism, capitalist expansionism, and universalist creed favoring unlimited immigration. "[Our] elite culture, particularly its supercharged business enterprise and expressive individualism, is itself merely an exaggerated version of some of the core values of the old Anglo-Protestant culture and of the American Creed. In the end, it is the

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American national culture that is working to abolish itself." What Huntington should be calling for, says Kurth, is the displacement of our cultural elites, but that would require a populist revolution, likely resulting in a society that is hardly consonant with Huntington's "core culture." Kurth's is a provocative and not entirely implausible thesis. I believe that, all in all, American national identity and, as a necessary accompaniment, American national sovereignty are good things for America and the world. But business, intellectual, and—to a considerable extent—religious elites are undermining that identity and sovereignty. Some Catholic thinkers who confuse ecclesial catholicity with political universalism morally reinforce that undermining. At the same time, populist pressure expressed not through revolution but through electoral power can, and is, tempering the globalist elites. And it may well be that the challenge of Islam will build to the point of being that "exogenous shock" of which Kurth writes. In which case, we may become less apologetically the Judeo-Christian society that most Americans think we are. But Huntington, Kurth, and others are right in recognizing that these questions and their possible answers constitute the great world-historical drama of this century, and perhaps the next. On the other hand, we should never underestimate the cunning of history and/or Providence in coming up with surprises, whether rude or welcome or a mix of both.

■ I am asked, "How did the Princeton conference go?" A nice thing about growing older is that there are more anniversaries to celebrate. The twentieth anniversary of *The Naked Public Square: Religion and Democracy in America* was observed with a session at the American Political Science Association meeting in Chicago last September. Some of those presentations were published in our November 2004 issue. In October 2004, there was a two-day conference on the book at Princeton University, sponsored by the James Madison Program in cooperation with Baylor University. I will not bore you with all the details. Not that I was bored, mind you. I'm discovering that being feted is rather pleasant. Many interesting things were said; the criticisms I will take to heart, the praise I will store up for the lean years. Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. was there. He is getting old and frail but managed a feisty assault on George W. Bush as "the most aggressively religious president in American history." Jeanne Heffernan of Villanova and George McKenna of City College, New York, effectively countered that Bush is very much in the presidential mainstream of mixing transcendent and temporal themes in articulating American purpose and identity. Joseph Weiler of New York University addressed the contrast between America and Europe in their understanding of religion and morality in the public square. Weiler is an orthodox Jew whose book on "Christian Europe" and why it should remain Christian has stirred great interest across the Atlantic. It is hoped the book will soon be published here. William Galston of the University of Maryland argued that John Rawls and I are not so far apart in our understanding of what counts as "public reason," and there is something, albeit only a little something, to that. Galston spoke of his becoming more seriously Jewish, which has brought with it a new awareness of the incommensurability of religious prescription and public reason. One respondent, philosopher Michael Pakaluk of Clark University, was not buying, contending that every assertion, whether "religious" or "secular," is subject to the question, "Is it true?" This led to fascinating reflections on the difference between Jewish and Christian views of the relationship between faith and reason. In his presentation, Gerard Bradley of Notre Dame suggested that the problem of the naked public square was being redressed by the direction of recent Supreme Court decisions. That roseate view met with considerable skepticism. Philip Hamburger of the University of Chicago argued in response that the great contest on the Court was not between the religious and the secular but between the liberally religious and the orthodox, with the former rather consistently prevailing. Almost everyone agrees that the triumph of the skeptics and liberally religious on the Court began with the *Everson* decision of 1947, and Hamburger noted, in a wry aside, that almost all the Justices of that time were Masons and decidedly anti-Catholic. The second day began with John Finnis of Oxford and Notre Dame on "telling the truth about God and man in a pluralistic society." It was a tour de force, ending with the question of whether human dignity can be sustained without a transcendent, meaning religious, warrant. Eric Gregory of Princeton responded that Finnis and those of similarly doleful mind may be lacking an Augustinian appreciation of the grace of God. Gregory also suggested that we meet on the fiftieth anniversary of the book to see how things turn out. I rather doubt I will be able to make that meeting. In her presentation, Mary Ann Glendon of Harvard Law School offered much for our thought but naught for our comfort by observing that, while there is a lot more discussion of religion and public life than there was twenty years ago, the juggernaut of secularism rolls relentlessly on, especially in education. To which American historian Walter McDougall of the University of Pennsylvania countered that there was much more religious vitality in the society than most intellectuals are prepared to recognize, and that that vitality is gaining a more effective public voice. I did the final

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wrap-up, saying pretty much what readers of these pages would expect me to say. At the concluding dinner, Hadley Arkes of Amherst did a tragic-comical turn on what we would be discussing at a fiftieth anniversary conference on *The Naked Public Square*, if we were still permitted to hold such conferences. He left us laughing through our tears. There were many other striking interventions at this splendid conference (and I think I would call it that even if it wasn't about my book and me), but perhaps the above is enough in response to the question, "How did the Princeton conference go?"

■ "If the Holy Spirit is God as much as the Father and the Son, how come he gets to be just a bird?" The question asked by a thirteen-year-old in a catechism class I taught many years ago was prompted by a depiction of Father and Son enthroned, with the Spirit as a dove hovering in the background. I expect her question has been asked by a good many Christians who, while not doubting the co-equality of the Spirit in the Holy Trinity, don't quite know how to think about it. I don't recommend it for thirteen-year-olds, but the following reflection by Robert Sokolowski of Catholic University is a suggestive aid to thinking on the way to contemplation. In a recent book of essays, *Ethics and Theological Disclosures*, Sokolowski notes that St. Paul says the Spirit intercedes for us "with inexpressible groanings" (Romans 8:26). The grammar of the Spirit's discourse is found not in his own words but in the speech of those whom he inspires to speak. It is the Church that gives voice to the Spirit. "Two places in which the Holy Spirit does speak in his own voice, but without using the first-person pronoun, are found in the Book of Revelation. In 14:13, the narrator says, 'I heard a voice from heaven say, "Write this: Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on." "Yes," said the Spirit, "let them find rest from their labors, for their works accompany them."' Here the Spirit speaks about the final condition of those who die in the Lord; he assures us that what they do will be with them after their death. They will be defined for eternity by the acts they perform in this life. The second passage is found near the end of the same book and hence at the end of the entire Bible. In 22:17 we read, 'The Spirit and the bride say, "Come."' This word is addressed to Christ in glory, whom the Holy Spirit and the Church invite to come at the end, at the transformation of time. This word of the Spirit is a suitable rejoinder to Christ's promise to send the Spirit; closure is achieved at the end of history as the Spirit, together with the Church that the Spirit animates, invites the Son to return, the Son who had sent the Spirit to guide the Church through her history. These two passages, these two verbalizations of the Spirit, deal with two forms of the end of time: with the conclusion of our own lives and the conclusion of worldly life itself. There are also two passages in the Acts of the Apostles in which the Spirit speaks in his own voice and does use the first-person pronoun. In Acts 10:19-20, the Spirit instructs Peter to welcome the centurion Cornelius and his companions ('because I have sent them'), and in Acts 13:2 we read, 'The Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them."' The Holy Spirit remains somewhat anonymous and undeclared in his present activity, because there is no further divine person to reveal him. The Son reveals the Father and the Holy Spirit reveals the Son, but there is no 'fourth' to reveal the Holy Spirit. This anonymity of the Spirit is somehow necessary; there must be someone with the authority to reveal the Son and through the Son, the Father, but that person must remain hidden and ought not declare himself; as Jesus said, 'He will not speak on his own, but he will speak what he hears.' (John 16:13) He is, after all, the Spirit and not the Word; he is an agent of truth in a manner different from the Son. The Son has said everything that needs to be said, but the Spirit brings it to life. If the Spirit were to speak on his own and thus bring himself into the foreground, he would detract from the declaration of the Son. The action between the Son and the Father, the essential action of the Gospels and the Church, would be relegated to the background. The Holy Spirit works to seal the unity between Son and Father; he does so in the Trinitarian life, in the incarnate life of Christ, and in the life of the Church. This unifying activity of the Spirit is expressed in the doxology found at the end of most prayers in the Latin rite, when we pray to the Father through our Lord Jesus Christ, 'who lives and reigns with you *in the unity* of the Holy Spirit,' that is, in the unity achieved by the Spirit. In sanctifying us, he brings us into the exchange between the Son and the Father. If the Holy Spirit were to declare himself and to speak at length in the first-person singular, his work would no longer enjoy the transparency that befits it. As Dom Anscar Vonier, O.S.B., states, the gift of the Spirit is 'essentially a completion of the Incarnation' and not 'an addition to it.'"

■ "Growing Up With Mom and Mom" is an article in the *New York Times Magazine*. It is accompanied by this précis: "Raised from birth by trailblazing lesbians, Ry Russo-Young has a boyfriend, a gay sister, a tangled history with her sperm-donor 'father'—and the outlook of a generation that has come of age between gay and straight cultures." We've had the baby-boom generation, generation X, and generation Y. Now we have the "between generation." Admittedly, not all young

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people today have lesbian moms or, for that matter, gay dads. Some have sisters and brothers who, remarkably enough, are attracted to the other sex. And quite a few are still conceived in the old fashioned way. So the "between generation" is not yet a fait accompli, but get ready for the future as perceived on the Upper West Side of Manhattan.

■ For complicated reasons, historical and other, the Vatican is deeply committed to the United Nations. Archbishop Celestino Migliore is Rome's representative at Turtle Bay and he recently addressed the General Assembly on "Strengthening the United Nations System." Migliore is a very thoughtful and personable man, and it must be kept in mind that generalized diplomatese is the language spoken on such occasions. "Today," he said, "the universal common good is confronted with problems of worldwide dimensions; problems, therefore, which can be solved only by an authority possessed with power, organization, and means coextensive with these problems and whose sphere of activity is worldwide." Translation: these problems cannot be solved by the UN. Migliore: "We should keep in mind that the United Nations is a community of states that shares fundamental values; freedom, equality, solidarity, tolerance, respect for nature, and shared responsibility." Translation: we very much wish that were true of more than, say, a quarter of the member nations of the UN. Restructuring the UN, the Archbishop said, requires "as far as possible, a representation of the world population, of geopolitical regions, of various levels of economic development, and of different civilizations." On all three scores, that would seem to mean an abandonment of the UN as an organization of member states. Were the UN to represent world population, one might observe, it would be run by China, India, and Indonesia, or some other combination of the majority of the world's people. As I say, I have the utmost respect for Archbishop Migliore. I really do. But his is not an easy job.

■ In one of Gibbon's many striking passages, he writes of the Frankish victory at Tours in 732 AD, which halted the Arab advance into Europe. "A victorious line of march had been prolonged above a thousand miles from the Rock of Gibraltar to the banks of the Loire; the repetition of an equal space would have carried the Saracens to the confines of Poland and the Highlands of Scotland: the Rhine is not more impassable than the Nile or the Euphrates, and the Arabian fleet might have sailed without a naval combat into the mouth of the Thames. Perhaps the interpretation of the Koran would now be taught in the schools of Oxford, and her pulpits might demonstrate to a circumcised people the sanctity and truth of the revelation of Mahomet." Writing in the *New York Review of Books*, William Dalrymple thinks that some of us have been too impressed by Bernard Lewis and Samuel Huntington, who have written so influentially on the clash of civilizations between Islam and the Christian West. ("Clash of civilizations" is a phrase that Huntington borrowed from Lewis.) Islam and Christianity have not always been so conflicted, insists Dalrymple, noting that St. John of Damascus in the eighth century wrote sympathetically of Islam, although clearly viewing it as a heterodox form of Christianity. Yes, but so very much blood has spilled over what Huntington calls "the bloody borders of Islam" since then. Against Lewis' thesis that Islam acts out of a deep resentment against being marginalized and manipulated by the West for the last three hundred years, Dalrymple draws on the work of Nabil Matar, who has documented in great detail more irenic interactions between Muslims and Christians in recent centuries. These stories are interesting, but they tend to be about somewhat eccentric and, as it is said today, alienated Europeans, many of whom discovered a sensual paradise in Islamic lands and not a few of whom became Muslims. I have given considerable attention to the arguments of Lewis and Huntington in these pages. It is not because I want them to be right, and I am more than open to a demonstration that their outlook is too dour. But I am afraid that Dalrymple's delight in discovering that some Englishmen who had been enslaved on the Barbary Coast in the seventeenth century declined to be rescued by an agent of Charles II because they had converted to Islam and "were living in a style to which they could not possibly have aspired back home" is not such a demonstration. To counter the view of Lewis and Huntington, one is looking for something more contemporary, and more substantive.

■ The more technically sophisticated of readers will understand this better than I, but I am told that it is very encouraging indeed. Between January and October 2004, action on the FIRST THINGS website increased from 4,963,407 hits per month to 7,054,629 (a hit is any successful request to a webserver from a visitor's browser); from 413,664 pageviews per month to 584,624 (a pageview is a request for a webpage); from 148,646 sessions per month to 193,572 (a session is a series of hits by one visitor). It may be cynical, but I imagine all those thousands of students cribbing for term papers. On the other hand, if they're going to plagiarize, better they plagiarize from us.

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■ Over the years, Gerard Bradley of Notre Dame and Robert P. George of Princeton have been among the most careful and persistent participants in civil debate over many questions, and far from least of these being the question of abortion. During the notably nasty election season now past, they together published a piece explaining why that question should have priority in making a conscientious decision about the candidates. This elicited from a professor at Notre Dame a splenetic attack on Bradley and George as "Rambo Catholics" who are terrorizing souls, exploiting Catholic teaching for partisan purposes, leading an insurrection against the American constitutional order, and doing other very bad things. In the hope that the professor has since repented of such vicious slander, I do not mention the name. The reason for bringing the matter up is that one of the defenders of Bradley and George in the lively exchanges that followed the attack quoted a marvelous passage from Robert George's *The Clash of Orthodoxies* on how to engage those with whom one disagrees on matters that really matter. The following is worth more than a moment's reflection: "They are not moral monsters. They are not Nazis or hatemongers. They are our colleagues and very often our friends. Many of them are doing their level best to think through the moral issues at the heart of our cultural struggle and arrive at conclusions that are right and just. They view themselves as partisans of a culture of freedom. In most cases, they carefully and honestly argue for those choices for death (as Dworkin himself calls them) whose moral worthiness they proclaim and whose legal permission and constitutional protection they defend. As a matter of reciprocity, it is, in my view, incumbent upon us, as their opponents, to engage them in debate, to answer their arguments, and to say why they are wrong. While we must oppose them with resolution and, indeed, determination to win, we cannot content ourselves merely to denounce them, as we would rightly denounce the moral monsters who created a different culture of death on the European continent in the 1930s and '40s."

■ I expect many Americans only vaguely remember the Beslan massacre in Russia of last September. More than three hundred men, women, and children were slaughtered by Muslim fanatics. The men were killed first, and the older children were forced to throw the corpses of their parents out the window. Most of the children killed were shot in the back as they tried to run away. In an interview at a conference dealing with terrorism, Renato Cardinal Martino, head of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, said, "We are facing a Fourth World War." For a moment it sounded as though he had been reading *Commentary*. But only for a moment. He continued, "We have to identify the causes. What provokes terrorism? Why? Until we have the answer, and until we try to address these causes, terrorism cannot be defeated." Later in the interview he said, "If a madman attacks me, obviously I have the right to defend myself. Society has the right to defend itself in the way it has always done when dealing with madmen. I've never said that there must be no use of force, and I've never called for the abolition of the use of arms." Whatever its other problems, the Cardinal's statement is a welcome clarification of his earlier and widely remarked assertion that there is today no such thing as a just war.

■ "At some time in the history of the universe, there were no human minds, and at some time later, there were. Within the blink of a cosmic eye, a universe in which all was chaos and void came to include hunches, beliefs, sentiments, raw sensations, pains, emotions, wishes, ideas, images, inferences, the feeling of rubber, *Schadenfreude*, and the taste of banana ice cream. A sense of surprise is surely in order. How did *that get here*?" So writes David Berlinski in *Commentary* on sundry efforts to explain the origins of the human mind. Different "similes" are employed. Some favor the argument that the mind is a like a digital computer, while others claim it is like any other organ of the body. Berlinski explains in scientific detail why those theories are, to put it gently, unconvincing. Then there is the more recent and fashionable explanatory entry of evolutionary psychology. Berlinski writes, "Evolutionary psychology is more a research program than a body of specific results. As a program, it rather resembles a weekend athlete forever preparing to embark on a variety of strenuous exercises. In the literature of evolutionary psychology, there is thus no very determined effort to assess any of the classical topics in the philosophy of mind with the aim of doing more than affirming vaguely that some aspect of the mind exists because it may well have been useful. There is, in evolutionary psychology, no account of the emotions beyond the trivial, or of the sentiments, no account of action or intention, no account of the human ability to acquire mathematical or scientific knowledge, no very direct exploration of the mind's power to act at a distance by investing things with meaning—no account, that is, of any the features of the mind whose existence prompts a question about its origins." But the mind must have come from somewhere. Berlinski quotes the fourth-century historian Eusebius who reports a Babylonian story about a big fish with a human head who long, long ago clambered out of the Red Sea and spent his days "teach-

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ing men the skills necessary for writing, and for doing mathematics, and for all sorts of knowledge." Since that time, Eusebius regretfully adds, "nothing further has been discovered."

■ To listen to the more hysterical media, which is to say the media that used to be called mainline, one might think that evangelicals who voted for Bush are a well-oiled machine of unanimous theocratic resolve. Not so. *Christianity Today* is the mainline magazine of those who are defined by distancing themselves from mainline Protestantism. The editorial section is titled "Where We Stand" and the editorial immediately before the November election was "For Whom Would Jesus Vote?" It is accompanied by a cartoon of Jesus looking mighty puzzled. As to where the editors stand, it seems they stand here, there, and maybe over there as well. The incoherence of the editorial suggests there was a good deal of in-house editorial wrangling over what they should say. "We continue to believe the classic Christian teaching that abortion is the wrongful taking of innocent human life and a grave sin." As of last November, the reader is assured, that is what they continued to believe. "Abortion is a monstrous tragedy for the nation, *but* our Christian commitment to a culture of life does not permit us the luxury of abandoning other important issues" (emphasis added). A "broad spectrum" of issues to be considered is listed, including creation care, peacemaking, religious freedom, and economic justice. The list ends with a wondrously expansive "and so on." You say abortion is a monstrous tragedy and grave sin? That may be true, but what about "and so on"? I'm afraid the editorial tips over into the deeply muddled. For instance, what is a *rightful* taking of innocent human life? The editors say that most Americans want abortion to be legal "under certain circumstances," such as "to end an unwanted pregnancy." Are there abortions that are *not* aimed at ending an unwanted pregnancy? The editorial concludes, "While single-mindedness in following Christ is always wise, single-issue voting may not be." (One imagines a junior editor savoring a scrap of consolation in getting "is not"changed to "may not be," the former being the position that logically follows from what goes before.) If a disciple's single-mindedness is about protecting innocent human life, the editors appear to believe, there is a lot to be said for double-mindedness when it comes to voting. Purity of heart, said Kierkegaard, is to will one thing, and *Christianity Today* agrees, as long as it is balanced by willing a lot of other things as well. As with so many rationales for voting for pro-abortion politicians, the editors' arguments against the priority of abortion assume for some unexplained reason that pro-abortionists would do better in attending to those other issues. "For Whom Would Jesus Vote?" is a theologically silly, if not blasphemous, question. Jesus is not registered. For whom did the editors think Jesus wanted evangelical Christians to vote? The editors did not say, although "Where We Stand" took its stand here, there, and just about anywhere except with those who took their stand in defense of innocent human life. It is a comfort to know that the editors "continue to believe" that abortion is a bad thing. But then, so is this, that, and the other thing —not to mention "and so on."

■ With distressing frequency, one hears Christians, usually of a conservative stripe, deny that tolerance is a Christian virtue. It is perhaps an understandable reaction to the mindless relativism of the champions of "diversity" for whom tolerance seems to be the only virtue. Nonetheless, tolerance is a virtue. These questions are intelligently addressed in *How the Idea of Religious Toleration Came to the West* by Perez Zagorin (Princeton University Press, 400 pp., $29.95). In the history of Christianity, there were times when Christians embraced a theological and moral rationale for persecuting, in the name of Christ, heretics and non-Christians. As Zagorin tells the story, the move toward the opposing rationale for tolerance is mostly attributable to Protestant and Anabaptist sources of the sixteenth century. Other scholars, such as Brian Tierney in *The Idea of Natural Rights*, locate the sources much earlier in the medieval and patristic tradition. It is a fact, however, that some Christians still have great difficulties with the idea of tolerance. They agree with their secularist opponents that, if a religious believer knows that he possesses the truth, he has every right, even obligation, to impose that truth on others, and to silence those who oppose that truth. The secularist, of course, draws the conclusion that that is what makes religion a threat to a free society. Among evangelical Protestants, the influence of R. J. Rushdoony and his Calvinist version of "Christian reconstructionism" is not inconsiderable. For Rushdoony and his followers, tolerance is something to be grudgingly tolerated until Christians are in a position to "claim the crown rights of Jesus" by reconstituting society on the basis of "Bible law." In a similar vein, some Catholics of an earlier time were fond of the maxim, "Error has no rights." Of course it is true that error has no rights, but errors are attached to persons and persons do have rights. As John Paul II has said again and again, the dignity of the human person is the foundation of the entirety of the Church's social doctrine. The thoroughgoing secularist has to grudgingly

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put up with (i.e., tolerate) believing Christians because they are not going to go away and he cannot—at least not in a way that he thinks morally defensible—get rid of them. The Christian, on the other hand, positively affirms and is even called to love the secularist because he bears the dignity of having been created in the image of God and has the potential, through Christ, of sharing in the life of God. So Zagorin is right in his claim that tolerance is not just something to be tolerated but is tolerance in the name of Christ. Although the sources of that understanding in the Christian tradition are much earlier and deeper than his fine book suggests.

■ The convener of a ROFTERS (Readers of FIRST THINGS) group in Florida complains that too many people want to lead discussions on too many items in the current issue. He wants us to rule that no meeting can address more than two articles. Please, it is your meeting and you'll have to work this out with the other participants. Happily, other groups seem to be flourishing without such problems, and new groups are being added all the time. To find a ROFTERS group near you, check out the website, *www.firstthings.com*. If you are interested in launching a group, write Erik Ross at *er@firstthings.com*.

■ We will be happy to send a sample issue of this journal to people who you think are likely subscribers. Please send names and addresses to FIRST THINGS, 156 Fifth Avenue, Suite 400, New York, New York 10010 (or e-mail to *subscriberservices@pma-inc.net*). On the other hand, if they're ready to subscribe, call toll free 1-877-905-9920, or visit *www.firstthings.com*.

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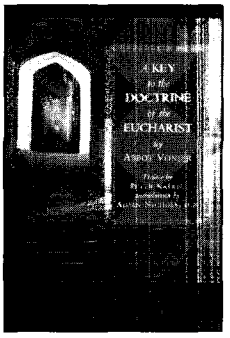

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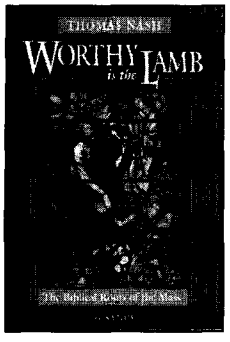

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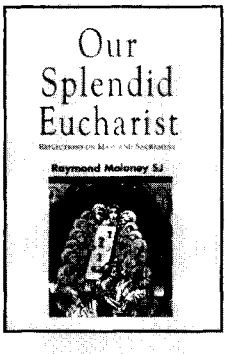

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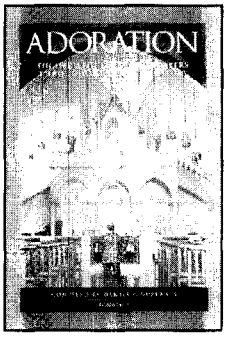

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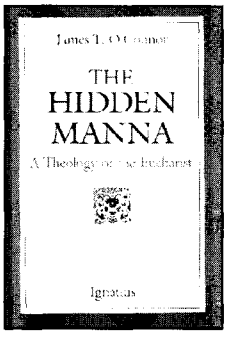

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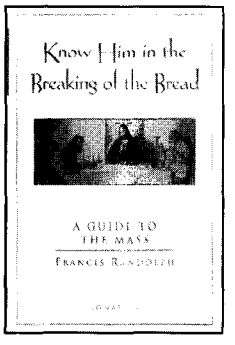

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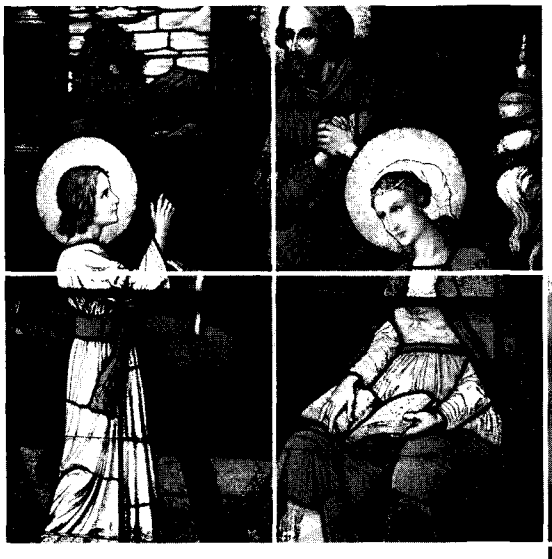

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